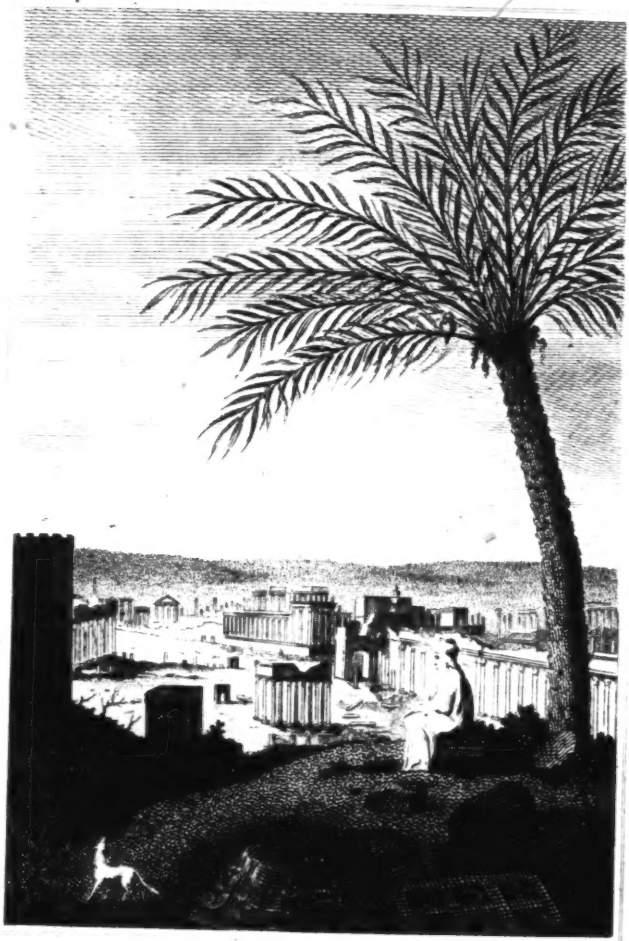
FRONTISPIECE.



Here an opulent City once flourished: this was the seat of a powerful Empire.—Yes, these places, now so desert, a living Multitude formerly animated &c.

Chap. II.

THE

RUINS:

OR

A SURVEY

OF THE

REVOLUTIONS

OF

EMPIRES.

BY M. VOLNEY,

ONE OF THE DEPUTIES TO THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF 1789;

AND AUTHOR OF TRAVELS INTO SYRIA AND EGYPT.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH.

THE SECOND EDITION.

I will dwell in ſolitude amidſt the ruins of cities: I will enquire of the monuments of antiquity, what was the wiſdom of former ages: I will aſk the aſhes of legiſlators, what cauſes have erected and overthrown empires; what are the principles of national proſperity and misfortune: what the maxims upon which the peace of ſociety and the happineſs of man ought to be founded? Ch. iv. p. 24.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR J. JOHNSON, ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD.

M.DCC.XCV.

UTOPIA
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PREFACE.

THE *plan of this publication was formed nearly ten years ago; and allusions to it may be seen in the Preface to Travels in Syria and Egypt, as well as at the end of that work, published in* 1787. *The performance was in some forwardness when the events of* 1788 *in France interrupted it. Persuaded that a developement of the theory of political truth could not sufficiently acquit a citizen of his debt to society, the author wished to add practice; and that particularly at a time when a single arm was of consequence in the defence of the general cause. The same desire of public benefit which induced him to suspend his work; has since engaged him to resume it; and though it may not possess the same merit as if it had appeared*

 under

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under the circumſtances that gave riſe to it, yet he imagines that at a time when new paſſions are burſting forth, paſſions that muſt communicate their activity to the religious opinions of men, it is of importance to diſſeminate ſuch moral truths as are calculated to operate as a ſort of curb and reſtraint. It is with this view he has endeavoured to give to theſe truths, hitherto treated as abſtract, a form likely to gain them a reception. It was found impoſſible not to ſhock the violent prejudices of ſome readers, but the work, ſo far from being the fruit of a diſorderly and perturbed ſpirit, has been dictated by a ſincere love of order and humanity.

After reading this performance it will be aſked, how it was poſſible, in 1784, *to have had an idea of what did not take place till the year* 1790. *The ſolution is ſimple: in the original plan, the legiſlator was a fictitious and hypothetical being: in the preſent, the author has ſubſtituted an exiſting legiſlator; and the reality has only made the ſubject additionally intereſting.*

INVO-

INVOCATION.

SOLITARY Ruins, ſacred Tombs, ye mouldering and ſilent Walls, all hail! To you I addreſs my INVOCATION. While the vulgar ſhrink from your aſpect with ſecret terror, my heart finds in the contemplation a thouſand delicious ſentiments, a thouſand admirable recollections. Pregnant, I may truly call you, with uſeful leſſons, with pathetic and irreſiſtible

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advice to the man who knows how to conſult you. A while ago the whole world bowed the neck in ſilence before the tyrants that oppreſſed it; and yet in that hopeleſs moment you already proclaimed the truths that tyrants hold in abhorrence: mixing the duſt of the proudeſt kings with that of the meaneſt ſlaves, you called upon us to contemplate this example of EQUALITY. From your caverns, whither the muſing and anxious love of LIBERTY led me, I ſaw eſcape its venerable ſhade, and with unexpected felicity direct its flight, and marſhal my ſteps the way to renovated France.

*

Tombs,

Tombs, what virtues and potency do you exhibit! Tyrants tremble at your aſpect; you poiſon with ſecret alarm their impious pleaſures; they turn from you with impatience, and, coward like, endeavour to forget you amid the ſumptuouſneſs of their palaces. It is you that bring home the rod of juſtice to the powerful oppreſſor; it is you that wreſt the ill-gotten gold from the mercileſs extortioner, and avenge the cauſe of him that has none to help; you compenſate the narrow enjoyments of the poor, by daſhing with care the goblet of the rich; to the unfortunate you offer a laſt and inviolable

aſylum;

aſylum; in fine, you give to the ſoul that juſt equilibrium of ſtrength and tenderneſs, which conſtitutes the wiſdom of the ſage and the ſcience of life. The wiſe man looks towards you, and ſcorns to amaſs vain grandeur and uſeleſs riches with which he muſt ſoon part: you check his lawleſs flights, without diſarming his adventure and his courage; he feels the neceſſity of paſſing through the period aſſigned him, and he gives employment to his hours, and makes uſe of the goods that fortune has aſſigned him. Thus do you rein in the wild ſallies of cupidity, calm the fever of tumultuous enjoyment, free

the mind from the anarchy of the paſſions, and raiſe it above thoſe little intereſts which torment the maſs of mankind. We aſcend the eminence you afford us, and, viewing with one glance the limits of nations and the ſucceſſion of ages, are incapable of any affections but ſuch as are ſublime, and entertain no ideas but thoſe of virtue and glory. Alas! when this uncertain dream of life ſhall be over, what then will avail all our buſy paſſions, unleſs they have left behind them the footſteps of utility!

Ye Ruins, I will return once more to attend your leſſons! I will reſume my place in the midſt of your wide

ſpreading

ſpreading ſolitude. I will leave the tragic ſcene of the paſſions, will love my ſpecies rather from recollection than actual ſurvey, will employ my activity in promoting their happineſs, and compoſe my own happineſs of the pleaſing remembrance that I have haſtened theirs.

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T. Conder Sculp.

A View of the
ASTROLOGICAL HEAVEN of the ANCIENTS,
to explain the Mysteries of the
Persian, Jewish, & Christian,
RELIGIONS.

THE

RUINS:

OR,

A SURVEY OF THE REVOLUTIONS OF EMPIRES.

CHAP. I.

THE TOUR.

IN the eleventh year of the reign of Abd-ul Hamid, ſon of Ahmed, emperor of the Turks; when the Nogaian Tartars were driven from the Crimea, and a Muſſulman prince, of the blood of Gengis Khan, became the vaſſal and *guard* of a woman, a Chriſtian, and a queen*; I journeyed in the empire of the Ottomans, and traverſed the provinces which formerly were kingdoms of Egypt and of Syria.

* That is to ſay, in the year 1784. The reader is requeſted not to loſe ſight of this epocha. See the notes at the end of the volume.

Directing all my attention to what concerns the happineſs of mankind in a ſtate of ſociety, I entered cities, and ſtudied the manners of their inhabitants; I gained admiſſion into palaces, and obſerved the conduct of thoſe who govern; I wandered over the country, and examined the condition of the peaſants: and no where perceiving aught but robbery and devaſtation, tyranny and wretchedneſs, my heart was oppreſſed with ſorrow and indignation.

Every day I found in my route fields abandoned by the plough, villages deſerted, and cities in ruins. Frequently I met with antique monuments; wrecks of temples, palaces, and fortifications; pillars, aqueducts, ſepulchres. By theſe objects my thoughts were directed to paſt ages, and my mind abſorbed in ſerious and profound meditation.

Arrived at Hamſa on the borders of the Orontes, and being at no great diſtance from the city of Palmyra, ſituated in the deſert, I reſolved to examine for myſelf its boaſted monuments. After three days travel in barren ſolitude, and having paſſed through a valley filled with grottoes and tombs, my

eyes were ſuddenly ſtruck, on leaving this valley and entering a plain, with a moſt aſtoniſhing ſcene of ruins. It conſiſted of a countleſs multitude of ſuperb columns ſtanding erect, and which, like the avenues of our parks, extended in regular files farther than the eye could reach. Among theſe columns magnificent edifices were obſervable, ſome entire, others in a ſtate half demoliſhed. The ground was covered on all ſides with fragments of ſimilar buildings, cornices, capitals, ſhafts, entablatures, and pilaſters, all conſtructed of a marble of admirable whiteneſs and exquiſite workmanſhip. After a walk of three quarters of an hour along theſe ruins, I entered the incloſure of a vaſt edifice which had formerly been a temple dedicated to the ſun; and I accepted the hoſpitality of ſome poor Arabian peaſants, who had eſtabliſhed their huts in the very area of the temple. Here I reſolved for ſome days to remain, that I might contemplate, at leiſure, the beauty of ſo many ſtupendous works.

Every day I viſited ſome of the monuments which covered the plain; and one evening that, my mind loſt in reflection, I had

advanced as far as the *Valley of Sepulchres*, I aſcended the heights that bound it, and from which the eye commands at once the whole of the ruins and the immenſity of the deſert. . . . The ſun had juſt ſunk below the horizon; a ſtreak of red ſtill marked the place of his deſcent, behind the diſtant mountains of Syria: the full moon, appearing with brightneſs upon a ground of deep blue, roſe in the eaſt from the ſmooth bank of the Euphrates: the ſky was unclouded; the air calm and ſerene; the expiring light of day ſerved to ſoften the horror of approaching darkneſs; the refreſhing breeze of the night gratefully relieved the intolerable ſultrineſs of the day that had preceded it; the ſhepherds had led the camels to their ſtalls; the grey firmament bounded the ſilent landſcape; through the whole deſert every thing was marked with ſtillneſs, undiſturbed but by the mournful cries of the bird of night, and of ſome *chacals**. . . . The duſk increaſed, and already I could diſtinguiſh nothing more than the

* An animal conſiderably like the fox, but leſs cunning, and of a frightful aſpect. It lives upon dead bodies, and rocks and ruins are the places of its habitation.

pale

pale phantoms of walls and columns. . . . The ſolitarineſs of the ſituation, the ſerenity of evening, and the grandeur of the ſcene, impreſſed my mind with religious thoughtfulneſs. The view of an illuſtrious city deſerted, the remembrance of paſt times, their compariſon with the preſent ſtate of things, all combined to raiſe my heart to a ſtrain of ſublime meditations. I ſat down on the baſe of a column; and there, my elbow on my knee, and my head reſting on my hand, ſometimes turning my eyes towards the deſert, and ſometimes fixing them on the ruins, I fell into a profound reverie.

CHAP. II.

MEDITATIONS.

HERE, ſaid I to myſelf, an opulent city once flouriſhed; this was the ſeat of a powerful empire. Yes, theſe places, now ſo deſert, a living multitude formerly animated, and an active crowd circulated in the ſtreets which at preſent are ſo ſolitary. Within thoſe walls, where a mournful ſilence reigns, the noiſe of the arts and the ſhouts of joy and feſtivity continually reſounded. Theſe heaps of marble formed regular palaces, theſe proſtrate pillars were the majeſtic ornaments of temples, theſe ruinous galleries preſent the outlines of public places. There a numerous people aſſembled for the reſpectable duties of its worſhip, or the anxious cares of its ſubſiſtence: there induſtry, the fruitful inventor of ſources of enjoyment, collected together the riches of every climate, and the purple of Tyre was exchanged for the precious thread of Serica; the ſoft tiſſues

of

of Caſſimere for the ſumptuous carpets of Lydia; the amber of the Baltic for the pearls and perfumes of Arabia; the gold of Ophir for the pewter of Thule (*a*). . . .

And now a mournful ſkeleton is all that ſubſiſts of this opulent city, and nothing remains of its powerful government but a vain and obſcure remembrance! To the tumultuous throng which crowded under theſe porticos, the ſolitude of death has ſucceeded. The ſilence of the tomb is ſubſtituted for the hum of public places. The opulence of a commercial city is changed into hideous poverty. The palaces of kings are become the receptacle of deer, and unclean reptiles inhabit the ſanctuary of the Gods. . . . What glory is here eclipſed, and how many labours are annihilated! . . . Thus periſh the works of men, and thus do nations and empires vaniſh away!

The hiſtory of paſt times ſtrongly preſented itſelf to my thoughts. I called to mind thoſe diſtant ages when twenty celebrated nations inhabited the country around me. I pictured to myſelf the Aſſyrian on the banks of the Tygris, the Chaldean on

thoſe of the Euphrates, the Perſian whoſe power extended from the Indus to the Mediterranean. I enumerated the kingdoms of Damaſcus and Idumea; of Jeruſalem and Samaria; and the warlike ſtates of the Philiſtines; and the commercial republics of Phenicia. This Syria, ſaid I to myſelf, now almoſt depopulated, then contained a hundred flouriſhing cities, and abounded with towns, villages, and hamlets (*b*). Every where one might have ſeen cultivated fields, frequented roads, and crowded habitations. Ah! what are become of thoſe ages of abundance and of life? What are become of ſo many productions of the hand of man? Where are thoſe ramparts of Nineveh, thoſe walls of Babylon, thoſe palaces of Perſepolis, thoſe temples of Balbec and of Jeruſalem? Where are thoſe fleets of Tyre, thoſe dock-yards of Arad, thoſe work-ſhops of Sidon, and that multitude of mariners, pilots, merchants, and ſoldiers? Where thoſe huſbandmen, thoſe harveſts, that picture of animated nature of which the earth ſeemed proud? Alas! I have traverſed this deſolate country, I have viſited the places that were the theatre

theatre of ſo much ſplendour, and I have beheld nothing but ſolitude and deſertion! I looked for thoſe ancient people and their works, and all I could find was a faint trace, like to what the foot of a paſſenger leaves on the ſand. The temples are thrown down, the palaces demoliſhed, the ports filled up, the towns deſtroyed, and the earth, ſtript of inhabitants, ſeems a dreary burying-place.... Great God! from whence proceed ſuch melancholy revolutions? For what cauſe is the fortune of theſe countries ſo ſtrikingly changed? Why are ſo many cities deſtroyed? Why is not that ancient population re-produced and perpetuated?

Thus abſorbed in contemplation, new ideas continually preſented themſelves to my thoughts. Every thing, continued I, miſleads my judgment, and fills my heart with trouble and uncertainty. When theſe countries enjoyed what conſtitutes the glory and felicity of mankind, they were an *unbelieving* people who inhabited them: it was the Phenician, offering human ſacrifices to Moloch, who brought together within his walls the riches of every climate; it was the Chaldean,

proſtrating

proſtrating himſelf before a ſerpent *, who ſubjugated opulent cities, and laid waſte the palaces of kings and the temples of the Gods; it was the Perſian, the worſhipper of fire, who collected the tributes of a hundred nations; they were the inhabitants of this very city, adorers of the ſun and ſtars, who erected ſo many monuments of affluence and luxury. Numerous flocks, fertile fields, abundant harveſts, every thing that ſhould have been the reward of *piety*, was in the hands of *idolaters:* and now that a *believing* and *holy* people occupy the countries, nothing is to be ſeen but ſolitude and ſterility. The earth under theſe *bleſſed* hands produces only briars and wormwood. Man ſows in anguiſh, and reaps vexation and cares; war, famine, and peſtilence, aſſault him in turn. Yet, are not theſe the children of the prophets? This Chriſtian, this Muſſulman, this Jew, are they not the elect of Heaven, loaded with gifts and miracles? Why then is this race, beloved of the Divinity, deprived of the favours which were formerly ſhowered upon the

* The dragon Bel.

Heathen?

Heathen? Why do theſe lands, conſecrated by the blood of the martyrs, no longer boaſt their former temperature and fertility? Why have thoſe favours been baniſhed as it were, and transferred for ſo many ages to other nations and different climes?

And here, purſuing the courſe of viciſſitudes which have in turn tranſmitted the ſceptre of the world to people ſo various in manners and religion, from thoſe of ancient Aſia down to the more recent ones of Europe, my native country, deſignated by this name, was awakened in my mind, and turning my eyes towards it, all my thoughts fixed upon the ſituation in which I had left it*.

I recollected its fields ſo richly cultivated, its roads ſo admirably executed, its towns inhabited by an immenſe multitude, its ſhips ſcattered over every ocean, its ports filled with the produce of either India; and comparing the activity of its commerce, the extent of its navigation, the magnificence of its buildings, the arts and induſtry of its inhabitants, with all that Egypt and Syria

* In the year 1782, at the cloſe of the American war.

could

could formerly boaſt of a ſimilar nature, I pleaſed myſelf with the idea that I had found in modern Europe the paſt ſplendour of Aſia: but the charm of my reverie was preſently diſſolved by the laſt ſtep in the compariſon. Reflecting that if the places before me had once exhibited this animated picture: who, ſaid I to myſelf, can aſſure me that their preſent deſolation will not one day be the lot of our own country? Who knows but that hereafter ſome traveller like myſelf will ſit down upon the banks of the Seine, the Thames, or the Zuyder ſea, where now, in the tumult of enjoyment, the heart and the eyes are too ſlow to take in the multitude of ſenſations; who knows but he will ſit down ſolitary amid ſilent ruins, and weep a people inurned, and their greatneſs changed into an empty name?

The idea brought tears into my eyes; and covering my head with the flap of my garment, I gave myſelf up to the moſt gloomy meditations on human affairs. Unhappy man! ſaid I in my grief, a blind fatality plays with thy deſtiny (*c*)! a fatal neceſſity rules by chance the lot of mortals! But, no: they

are

are the decrees of celeſtial juſtice that are accompliſhing! A myſterious God exerciſes his incomprehenſible judgments! he has doubtleſs pronounced a ſecret malediction againſt the earth; he has ſtruck with a curſe the preſent race of men, in revenge of paſt generations. Oh! who ſhall dare to fathom the depths of the Divinity?

And I remained immoveable, plunged in profound melancholy.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

THE APPARITION.

IN the mean time a noiſe ſtruck my ear, like to the agitation of a flowing robe, and the ſlow ſteps of a foot upon the dry and ruſtling graſs. Alarmed, I drew my mantle from my head; and caſting round me a timid glance, ſuddenly, by the obſcure light of the moon, through the pillars and ruins of a temple, I thought I ſaw, at my left, a pale apparition, enveloped in an immenſe drapery, ſimilar to what ſpectres are painted when iſſuing out of the tombs. I ſhuddered; and while in this troubled ſtate, I was heſitating whether to fly, or aſcertain the reality of the viſion, a hollow voice, in grave and ſolemn accents, thus addreſſed me:

How long will man importune the heavens with unjuſt complaint? How long, with vain clamours, will he accuſe Fate as the author of his calamities? Will he then never open his eyes

eyes to the light, and his heart to the inſinuations of truth and reaſon! This truth every where preſents itſelf in radiant brightneſs; and he does not ſee it! The voice of reaſon ſtrikes his ear; and he does not hear it! Unjuſt man! if you can for a moment ſuſpend the deluſion which faſcinates your ſenſes; if your heart be capable of comprehending the language of argumentation, interrogate theſe ruins! read the leſſons which they preſent to you!....And you, ſacred temples! venerable tombs! walls once glorious! the witneſſes of twenty different ages, appear in the cauſe of nature herſelf! come to the tribunal of ſound underſtanding, to bear teſtimony againſt an unjuſt accuſation, to confound the declamations of falſe wiſdom or hypocritical piety, and avenge the heavens and the earth of man who calumniates them!

What is this blind fatality, that, without order or laws, ſports with the lot of mortals? What this unjuſt neceſſity, which confounds the iſſue of actions, be they thoſe of prudence or thoſe of folly? In what conſiſt the maledictions of Heaven denounced againſt theſe countries? Where is the divine curſe that perpetuates

perpetuates this ſcene of deſolation? Monuments of paſt ages! ſay, have the heavens changed their laws, and the earth its courſe? Has the ſun extinguiſhed his fires in the region of ſpace? Do the ſeas no longer ſend forth clouds? Are the rain and the dew fixed in the air? Do the mountains retain their ſprings? Are the ſtreams dried up? and do the plants no more bear fruit and ſeed? Anſwer, race of falſehood and iniquity, has God troubled the primitive and invariable order which he himſelf aſſigned to nature? Has heaven denied to the earth, and the earth to its inhabitants, the bleſſings that were formerly diſpenſed? If the creation has remained the ſame, if its ſources and its inſtruments are exactly what they once, were wherefore ſhould not the preſent race have every thing within their reach that their anceſtors enjoyed? Falſely do you accuſe Fate and the Divinity: injuriouſly do you refer to God the cauſe of your evils. Tell me, perverſe and hypocritical race, if theſe places are deſolate, if powerful cities are reduced to ſolitude, is it he that has occaſioned the ruin? Is it his hand that has thrown down

theſe

theſe walls, ſapped theſe temples, mutilated theſe pillars? or is it the hand of man? Is it the arm of God that has introduced the ſword into the city and ſet fire to the country, murdered the people, burned the harveſts, rooted up the trees, and ravaged the paſtures? or is it the arm of man? And when, after this devaſtation, famine has ſtarted up, is it the vengeance of God that has ſent it, or the mad fury of mortals? When, during the famine, the people are fed with unwholeſome provision, and peſtilence enſues, is it inflicted by the anger of Heaven, or brought about by human imprudence! When war, famine, and peſtilence united have ſwept away the inhabitants, and the land is become a deſert, is it God who has depopulated it? Is it his rapacity that plunders the labourer, ravages the productive fields, and lays waſte the country; or the rapacity of thoſe who govern? Is it his pride that creates murderous wars, or the pride of kings and their miniſters? Is it the venality of his decisions that overthrows the fortune of families, or the venality of the organs of the laws? Are they his paſſions that, under a thouſand forms, torment in-

dividuals and nations; or the paſſions of human beings? And if in the anguiſh of their misfortunes they perceive not the remedies, is it the ignorance of God that is in fault, or their own ignorance? Ceaſe, then, to accuſe the decrees of Fate or the judgments of Heaven! If God is good, will he be the author of your puniſhment? If he is juſt, will he be the accomplice of your crimes? No, no; the caprice of which man complains is not the caprice of deſtiny: the darkneſs that miſleads his reaſon is not the darkneſs of God; the ſource of his calamities is not in the diſtant heavens, but near to him upon the earth; it is not concealed in the boſom of the Divinity; it reſides in himſelf, man bears it in his heart.

You murmur, and ſay: Why have an unbelieving people enjoyed the bleſſings of heaven and of the earth? Why is a holy and choſen race leſs fortunate than impious generations? Deluded man! where is the contradiction at which you take offence? Where the inconſiſtency in which you ſuppoſe the juſtice of God to be involved? Take the balance of bleſſings and calamities, of cauſes and effects,

and

and tell me—When thoſe infidels obſerved the laws of the earth and the heavens, when they regulated their intelligent labours by the order of the ſeaſons and the courſe of the ſtars, ought God to have troubled the equilibrium of the world to defeat their prudence? When they cultivated with care and toil the face of the country around you, ought he to have turned aſide the rain, to have withheld the fertilizing dews, and cauſed thorns to ſpring up? When, to render this parched and barren ſoil productive, their induſtry conſtructed aqueducts, dug canals, and brought the diſtant waters acroſs the deſerts, ought he to have blighted the harveſts which art had created; to have deſolated a country that had been peopled in peace; to have demoliſhed the towns which labour had cauſed to flouriſh; in fine, to have deranged and confounded the order eſtabliſhed by the wiſdom of man? And what is this *infidelity* which founded empires by prudence, defended them by courage, and ſtrengthened them by juſtice; which raiſed magnificent cities, formed vaſt ports, drained peſtilential marſhes, covered the ſea with ſhips, the earth

with inhabitants, and, like the creative ſpirit, diffuſed life and motion through the world. If ſuch is impiety, what is true belief? Does holineſs conſiſt in deſtruction? Is then the God that peoples the air with birds, the earth with animals, and the waters with reptiles; the God that animates univerſal nature, a God that delights in ruins and ſepulchres? Does he aſk devaſtation for homage, and conflagration for ſacrifice? Would he have groans for hymns, murderers to worſhip him, and a deſert and ravaged world for his temple? Yet ſuch, *holy* and *faithful* generation, are your works! Theſe are the fruits of your *piety!* You have maſſacred the people, reduced cities to aſhes, deſtroyed all trace of cultivation, made the earth a ſolitude; and you demand the reward of your labours! Miracles are not too much for your advantage! For you the peaſants that you have murdered ſhould be revived; the walls you have thrown down ſhould riſe again; the harveſts you have ravaged ſhould flouriſh; the conduits that you have broken down ſhould be renewed; the laws of heaven and earth, thoſe laws which God has eſtabliſhed for the diſplay

diſplay of his greatneſs and his magnificence, thoſe laws anterior to all revelations and to all prophets, thoſe laws which paſſion cannot alter, and ignorance cannot pervert, ſhould be ſuperſeded. Paſſion knows them not; ignorance, which obſerves no cauſe and predicts no effect, has ſaid in the fooliſhneſs of her heart: "Every thing comes from chance; "a blind fatality diſtributes good and evil "upon the earth; ſucceſs is not to the pru- "dent, nor felicity to the wiſe." Or elſe, aſſuming the language of hypocriſy, ſhe has ſaid: "Every thing comes from God; and it "is his ſovereign pleaſure to deceive the ſage, "and to confound the judicious." And ſhe has contemplated the imaginary ſcene with complacency. "Good!" ſhe has exclaimed. "I then am as well endowed as the ſcience "that deſpiſes me! The cold prudence "which evermore haunts and torments me, "I will render uſeleſs by a lucky interven- "tion of Providence." Cupidity has joined the chorus. "I too will oppreſs the weak; "I will wring from him the fruits of his "labour: for ſuch is the decree of Heaven, "ſuch the omnipotent will of fate."—For

myſelf, I ſwear by all laws human and divine, by the laws of the human heart, that the hypocrite and the deceiver ſhall be themſelves deceived; the unjuſt man ſhall periſh in his rapacity, and the tyrant in his uſurpation: the ſun ſhall change its courſe, before folly ſhall prevail over wiſdom and ſcience, before ſtupidity ſhall ſurpaſs prudence in the delicate art of procuring to man his true enjoyments, and of building his happineſs upon a ſolid foundation.

CHAP. IV.

THE HEMISPHERE.

THUS ſpoke the apparition. Aſtoniſhed at his diſcourſe, and my heart agitated by a diverſity of reflections, I was for ſome time ſilent. At length, aſſuming the courage to ſpeak, I thus addreſſed him: O Genius of tombs and ruins! your ſudden appearance and your ſeverity have thrown my ſenſes into diſorder, but the juſtneſs of your reaſoning reſtores confidence to my ſoul. Pardon my ignorance. Alas! if man is blind, can that which conſtitutes his torment be alſo his crime? I was unable to diſtinguiſh the voice of reaſon; but the moment it was known to me, I gave it welcome. Oh! if you can read my heart, you know how deſirous it is of truth, and with what ardour it ſeeks it; you know that it is in this purſuit I am now found in theſe remote places. Alas! I have wandered over the earth, I have viſited cities and

countries; and perceiving every where misery and desolation, the sentiment of the evils by which my fellow creatures are tormented has deeply afflicted my mind! I have said to myself with a sigh: Is man, then, created to be the victim of pain and anguish? And I have meditated upon human evils, that I might find out their remedy. I have said, I will separate myself from corrupt societies; I will remove far from palaces where the soul is depraved by satiety, and from cottages where it is humbled by misery. I will dwell in solitude amidst the ruins of cities: I will enquire of the monuments of antiquity what was the wisdom of former ages: in the very bosom of sepulchres I will invoke the spirit that formerly in Asia gave splendour to states and glory to their people: I will enquire of the ashes of legislators what causes have erected and overthrown empires; what are the principles of national prosperity and misfortune; what the maxims upon which the peace of society and the happiness of man ought to be founded.

I stopped; and casting down my eyes, I waited the reply of the Genius. Peace and happiness,

happineſs, ſaid he, deſcend upon him who practiſes juſtice! Young man, ſince your heart ſearches after truth with ſincerity; ſince you can diſtinguiſh her form through the miſt of prejudices which blind the eyes, your enquiry ſhall not be vain: I will diſplay to your view this truth of which you are in purſuit; I will ſhow to your reaſon the knowledge which you deſire; I will reveal to you the wiſdom of the tombs, and the ſcience of ages—Then approaching me, and placing his hand upon my head, Riſe, mortal, ſaid he, and diſengage yourſelf from that corporeal frame with which you are incumbered—Inſtantly, penetrated as with a celeſtial flame, the ties that fix us to the earth ſeemed to be looſened; and lifted by the wing of the Genius, I felt myſelf like a light vapour conveyed in the uppermoſt region. There, from above the atmoſphere, looking down towards the earth I had quitted, I beheld a ſcene entirely new. Under my feet, floating in empty ſpace, a globe ſimilar to that of the moon, but ſmaller and leſs luminous, preſented to me one of its faces *;

* See Plate I. repreſenting half the terreſtrial globe.

and this face had the appearance of a diſk variegated with ſpots, ſome of them white and nebulous, others brown, green and grey; and while I exerted my powers in diſcerning and diſcriminating theſe ſpots—Diſciple of truth, ſaid the Genius to me, have you any recollection of this ſpectacle? O Genius, I replied, if I did not perceive the moon in a different part of the heavens, I ſhould ſuppoſe the orb below me to be that planet; for its appearance reſembles perfectly the moon viewed through a teleſcope at the time of an eclipſe: one might be apt to think the variegated ſpots to be ſeas and continents.

Yes, ſaid he to me, they are the ſeas and continents of the very hemiſphere you inhabit.

What, exclaimed I, is that the Earth that is inhabited by human beings?

It is, replied he. That brown ſpace which occupies irregularly a conſiderable portion of the diſk, and nearly ſurrounds it on all ſides, is what you call the main ocean, which, from the ſouth pole advancing towards the equator, firſt forms the great gulf of Africa and India, then ſtretches to the eaſt acroſs the Malay Iſlands, as far as the confines of

Tartary, while at the weſt it incloſes the continents of Africa and of Europe, reaching to the north of Aſia.

Under our feet, that peninſula of a ſquare figure is the deſert country of Arabia, and on the left you perceive that great continent, ſcarcely leſs barren in its interior parts, and only verdant as it approaches the ſea, the inhabitants of which are diſtinguiſhed by a ſable complexion *. To the north, and on the other ſide of an irregular and narrow ſea †, are the tracts of Europe, rich in fertile meadows and in all the luxuriance of cultivation. To the right from the Caſpian, extend the rugged ſurface and ſnow-topt hills of Tartary. In bringing back the eye again to the ſpot over which we are elevated, you ſee a large white ſpace, the melancholy and uniform deſert of Cobi, cutting off the empire of China from the reſt of the world. China itſelf is that furrowed ſurface which ſeems by a ſudden obliquity to eſcape from the view. Farther on, thoſe vaſt tongues of land and ſcattered points, are the peninſula, and iſlands of the Malayans, the unfortunate

* Africa. † The Mediterranean.

proprietors

proprietors of aromatics and perfumes. Still nearer you obſerve a triangle which projects ſtrongly into the ſea, and is the too famous peninſula of India (*d*). You ſee the crooked windings of the Ganges, the ambitious mountains of Thibet, the fortunate valley of Caſſimere (12), the diſcouraging deſerts of Perſia, the banks of the Euphrates and the Tigris, the rough bed of the Jordan (4), and the mouths of the ſolitary Nile. (See the plate.)

O Genius, ſaid I, interrupting him, the organ of a mortal would in vain attempt to diſtinguiſh objects at ſo great a diſtance. Immediately he touched my eyes, and they became more piercing than thoſe of the eagle; notwithſtanding which rivers appeared to me no more than meandering ribbons, ridges of mountains irregular furrows, and great cities a neſt of boxes varied among themſelves like the ſquares in a cheſs-board.

The Genius proceeded to point out the different objects to me with his finger, and to develope them as he proceeded. Theſe heaps of ruins, ſaid he, that you obſerve in this narrow valley, laved by the Nile, are all that remain of the opulent cities that gave luſtre

luſtre to the ancient kingdom of Ethiopia (*e*). Here is the monument of its ſplendid metropolis, Thebes with its hundred palaces (*f*), the progenitor of cities, the memento of human frailty. It was there that a people, ſince forgotten, diſcovered the elements of ſcience and art, at a time when all other men were barbarous, and that a race, now regarded as the refuſe of ſociety, becauſe their hair is woolly and their ſkin is dark, explored among the phenomena of nature, thoſe civil and religious ſyſtems which have ſince held mankind in awe. A little lower the dark ſpots that you obſerve are the pyramids (1) whoſe maſſes have overwhelmed your imagination. Farther on, the coaſt (3) that you behold limited by the ſea on one ſide, and by a ridge of mountains on the other, was the abode of the Phenician nations; there ſtood the powerful cities of Tyre, Sidon, Aſcalon, Gaza, and Berytus. This ſtream of water, which ſeems to diſembogue itſelf into no ſea (4), is the Jordan; and theſe barren rocks were formerly the ſcene of events, whoſe tale may not be forgotten. Here you find the deſert of Horeb, and the hill of Sinai (5), where,

where, by artifice which the vulgar were unable to penetrate, a ſubtle and daring leader gave birth to inſtitutions of memorable influence upon the hiſtory of mankind. Upon the barren ſtrip of land which borders upon this deſert, you ſee no longer any trace of ſplendour; and yet here was formerly the magazine of the world. Here were the ports of the Idumeans (*g*), from whence the fleets of the Phenicians and the Jews, coaſting the peninſula of Arabia, bent their voyages to the Perſian gulf, and imported from thence the pearls of Hevila, the gold of Saba and Ophir. It was here, on the ſide of Oman and Bahrain, that exiſted that ſite of magnificent and luxurious commerce, which, as it was tranſplanted from country to country, decided upon the fate of ancient nations. Hither were brought the vegetable aromatics, and the precious ſtones of Ceylon, the ſhawls of Caſſimere, the diamonds of Golconda, the amber of the Maldives, the muſk of Thibet, the aloes of Cochin, the apes and the peacocks of the continent of India, the incenſe of Hadramut, the myrrh, the ſilver, the gold duſt, and the ivory of Africa. From hence

hence were exported, ſometimes by the Black Sea, in ſhips of Egypt and Syria, theſe commodities, which conſtituted the opulence of Thebes, Sidon, Memphis, and Jeruſalem; ſometimes aſcending the courſe of the Tygris and the Euphrates, they awakened the activity of the Aſſyrians, the Medes, the Chaldeans, and the Perſians, and according as they were uſed or abuſed, cheriſhed or overturned their wealth and proſperity. Hence grew up the magnificence of Perſepolis, of which you may obſerve the mouldering columns (8); of Ecbatana (9), whoſe ſeven-fold walls are levelled with the earth; of Babylon (10), the ruins of which are trodden under foot of men (*b*); of Nineveh (11), whoſe name ſeems to be threatened with the ſame oblivion, that has overtaken its greatneſs; of Thapſacus, of Anatho, of Gerra, and of the melancholy and memorable Palmyra. O names, for ever glorious! celebrated fields! famous countries! how replete is your aſpect with ſublime inſtruction! How many profound truths are written on the ſurface of this earth! Ye places that here witneſſed the life of man, in ſo many different

ages,

ages, aid my recollection while I endeavour to trace the revolutions of his fortune! Say, what were the motives of his conduct, and what his powers! Unveil the cauſes of his misfortunes, teach him true wiſdom, and let the experience of paſt ages become a mirror of inſtruction, and a germ of happineſs to preſent and future generations!

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

CONDITION OF MAN IN THE UNIVERSE.

AFTER a ſhort ſilence, the Genius thus reſumed his inſtructions:

I have already obſerved to you, O friend of truth, that man vainly attributes his miſfortunes to obſcure and imaginary agents, and ſeeks out remote and myſterious cauſes, from which to deduce his evils. In the general order of the univerſe, his condition is doubtleſs ſubjected to inconveniences, and his exiſtence over-ruled by ſuperior powers; but theſe powers are neither the decrees of a blind deſtiny, nor the caprices of fantaſtic beings. Man is governed, like the world of which he forms a part, by natural laws, regular in their operation, conſequent in their effects, immutable in their eſſence; and theſe laws, the common ſource of good and evil, are neither written in the diſtant ſtars, nor concealed in myſterious codes: inherent in the nature of all terreſtrial beings, identi-

fied with their exiſtence, they are at all times and in all places preſent to the human mind; they act upon the ſenſes, inform the intellect, and annex to every action its puniſhment and its reward. Let man ſtudy theſe laws, let him underſtand his own nature, and the nature of the beings that ſurround him, and he will know the ſprings of his deſtiny, the cauſes of his evils, and the remedies to be applied.

When the ſecret power that animates the univerſe, formed the globe of the earth, he ſtamped on the beings which compoſe it eſſential properties, that became the rule of their individual action, the tie of their reciprocal connections, and the cauſe of the harmony of the whole. He hereby eſtabliſhed a regular order of cauſes and effects, of principles and conſequences, which, under an appearance of chance, governs the univerſe, and maintains the equilibrium of the world. Thus he gave to fire motion and activity, to air elaſticity, to matter weight and denſity; he made air lighter than water, metals heavier than earth, wood leſs coheſive than ſteel; he ordered the flame to aſcend, the ſtone to fall, the plant to vegetate; to man,

whom

whom he decreed to expoſe to the encounter of ſo many ſubſtances, and yet wiſhed to preſerve his frail exiſtence, he gave the faculty of perception. By this faculty, every action injurious to his life gives him a ſenſation of pain and evil, and every favourable action a ſenſation of pleaſure and good. By theſe impreſſions, ſometimes led to avoid what is offenſive to his ſenſes, and ſometimes attracted towards the objects that ſoothe and gratify them, man has been neceſſitated to love and preſerve his exiſtence. Self-love, the deſire of happineſs, and an averſion to pain, are the eſſential and primary laws that nature herſelf impoſed on man, that the ruling power, whatever it be, has eſtabliſhed to govern him: and theſe laws, like thoſe of motion in the phyſical world, are the ſimple and prolific principle of every thing that takes place in the moral world.

Such then is the condition of man: on one ſide, ſubjected to the action of the elements around him, he is expoſed to a variety of inevitable evils; and if in this decree Nature appears too ſevere, on the other hand, juſt and even indulgent, ſhe has not only

tempered thoſe evils with an equal portion of benefits, ſhe has moreover given him the power of augmenting the one and diminiſhing the other. She has ſeemingly ſaid to him, "Feeble "work of my hands, I owe you nothing, "and I give you life. The world in which "I place you was not made on your account, "and yet I grant you the uſe of it. You "will find in it a mixture of good and evil. "It is for you to diſtinguiſh them; you muſt "direct your own ſteps in the paths of "flowers and of thorns. Be the arbitrator "of your lot; I place your deſtiny in your "hands."——Yes, man is become the artificer of his fate; it is himſelf who has created in turn the viciſſitudes of his fortune, his ſucceſſes and his diſappointments; and if, when he reflects on the ſorrows which he has aſſociated to human life, he has reaſon to lament his weakneſs and his folly, he has perhaps ſtill more right to preſume upon his force, and be confident in his energies, when he recollects from what point he has ſet out, and to what heights he has been capable of elevating himſelf.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

ORIGINAL STATE OF MAN.

IN the origin of things, man, formed equally naked both as to body and mind, found himſelf thrown by chance upon a land confuſed and ſavage. An orphan, deſerted by the unknown power that had produced him, he ſaw no ſupernatural beings at hand to adverti ſe him of wants that he owed merely to his ſenſes, and inform him of duties ſpringing ſolely from thoſe wants. Like other animals, without experience of the paſt, without knowledge of the future, he wandered in foreſts, guided and governed purely by the affections of his nature. By the pain of hunger he was directed to ſeek food, and he provided for his ſubſiſtence; by the inclemencies of the weather, the deſire was excited of covering his body, and he made himſelf cloathing; by the attraction of a powerful pleaſure, he approached a fellow-being, and perpetuated his ſpecies.

Thus the impreſſions he received from external objects, awakening his faculties, developed by degrees his underſtanding, and began to inſtruct his profound ignorance: his wants called forth his induſtry; his dangers formed his mind to courage; he learned to diſtinguiſh uſeful from pernicious plants, to reſiſt the elements, to ſeize upon his prey, to defend his life; and his miſery was alleviated.

Thus *ſelf-love, averſion to pain, and deſire of happineſs*, were the ſimple and powerful motives which drew man from the ſavage and barbarous ſtate in which Nature had placed him: and now that his life is ſown with enjoyment, that he can every day count upon ſome pleaſure, he may applaud himſelf and ſay: "It is I who have produced the bleſ-
"ſings that encompaſs me; I am the fabri-
"cator of my own felicity; a ſecure habita-
"tion, commodious raiment, an abundance
"of wholeſome proviſion in rich variety,
"ſmiling valleys, fertile hills, populous em-
"pires, theſe are the works of my hand; but
"for me, the earth, given up to diſorder,
"would have been nothing more than a
"poiſonous ſwamp, a ſavage foreſt, and a
"hideous

"hideous deſert!" True, mortal creator! I pay thee homage! Thou haſt meaſured the extent of the heavens, and counted the ſtars, thou haſt drawn the lightning from the clouds, conquered the fury of the ſea and the tempeſt, and ſubjected all the elements to thy will! But, oh! how many errors are mixed with theſe ſublime energies!

CHAP. VII.

PRINCIPLES OF SOCIETY.

IN the mean time, wandering in woods and upon the borders of rivers, in purſuit of deer and of fiſh, the firſt human beings, hunters and fiſhermen, beſet with dangers, aſſailed by enemies, tormented by hunger, by reptiles, and by the animals they chaſed, felt their individual weakneſs; and, impelled by a common want of ſafety, and a common ſentiment of the ſame evils, they united their powers and their ſtrength. When one man was expoſed to danger, numbers ſuccoured and defended him; when one failed in proviſion, another ſhared with him his prey. Men thus aſſociated for the ſecurity of their exiſtence, for the augmentation of their faculties, for the protection of their enjoyment; and the principle of ſociety was that of *ſelf-love*.

Afterwards, inſtructed by the repeated experience of diverſe accidents, by the fatigues of

of a wandering life, by the anxiety reſulting from frequent ſcarcity, men reaſoned with themſelves, and ſaid: "Why ſhould we con-"ſume our days in ſearch of the ſcattered "fruits which a parſimonious ſoil affords? "Why weary ourſelves in the purſuit of "prey that eſcape us in the woods or the "waters? Let us aſſemble under our hand "the animals that nouriſh us; let us apply "our cares to the increaſe and defence of "them. Their produce will afford us a ſup-"ply of food, with their ſpoils we may "clothe ourſelves, and we ſhall live exempt "from the fatigues of the day, and ſolicitude "for the morrow." And aiding each other, they ſeized the nimble kid and the timid ſheep; they tamed the patient camel, the ferocious bull, and the impetuous horſe; and applauding themſelves on the ſucceſs of their induſtry, they ſat down in the joy of their hearts, and began to taſte repoſe and tranquillity: and thus *ſelf-love*, the principle of all their reaſoning, was the inſtigator to every art and every enjoyment.

Now that men could paſs their days in leiſure, and the communication of their ideas, they

they turned upon the earth, upon the heavens, and upon themſelves, an eye of curioſity and reflection. They obſerved the courſe of the ſeaſons, the action of the elements, the properties of fruits and plants; and they applied their minds to the multiplication of their enjoyments. Remarking in certain countries the nature of ſeeds, which contain within themſelves the faculty of re-producing the parent plant, they employed to their own advantage this property of Nature: they committed to the earth barley, wheat, and rice, and reaped a produce equal to their moſt ſanguine hopes. Thus they found the means of obtaining within a ſmall compaſs, and without the neceſſity of perpetual wanderings, a plentiful and durable ſtock of proviſion; and encouraged by this diſcovery, they prepared for themſelves fixed habitations, they conſtructed houſes, villages, and towns; they aſſumed the form of tribes and of nations: and thus was *ſelf-love* rendered the parent of every thing that genius has effected, or human power performed.

By the ſole aid then of his faculties, has man been able to raiſe himſelf to the aſtoniſh-

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ing height of his preſent fortune. Too happy would have been his lot, had he, ſcrupulouſly obſerving the law imprinted on his nature, conſtantly fulfilled the object of it! But, by a fatal imprudence, ſometimes overlooking and ſometimes tranſgreſſing its limits, he plunged in an abyſs of errors and misfortunes; and *ſelf-love*, now diſordered, and now blind, was converted into a prolific ſource of calamities.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

SOURCE OF THE EVILS OF SOCIETY.

IN reality, ſcarcely were the faculties of men expanded, than, ſeized by the attraction of objects which flatter the ſenſes, they gave themſelves up to unbridled deſires. The ſweet ſenſations which nature had annexed to their true wants, to attach them to life, no longer ſufficed. Not ſatisfied with the fruits which the earth offered them, or their induſtry produced, they were deſirous of heaping up enjoyments, and they coveted thoſe which their fellow-creatures poſſeſſed. A ſtrong man roſe up againſt a weak one, to tear from him the profit of his labour: the weak man ſolicited the ſuccour of a neighbour, weak like himſelf, to repel the violence. The ſtrong man in his turn aſſociated himſelf with another ſtrong man, and they ſaid: "Why ſhould we fatigue our arms in pro-"ducing enjoyments which we find in the "hands of the feeble, who are unable to de-

"fend

"fend themſelves? Let us unite, and plun-
"der them. They ſhall toil for us, and we
"will enjoy in indolence the fruit of their
"exertions." The ſtrong thus aſſociating for the purpoſe of oppreſſion, and the weak for reſiſtance, men reciprocally tormented each other, and a fatal and general diſcord was eſtabliſhed upon the earth, in which the paſſions, aſſuming a thouſand new forms, have never ceaſed to generate a regular train of calamities.

Thus that very principle of ſelf-love, which, when reſtrained within the limits of prudence, was a ſource of improvement and felicity, became transformed, in its blind and diſordered ſtate, into a contagious poiſon. Cupidity, the daughter and companion of ignorance, has produced all the miſchiefs that have deſolated the globe.

Yes, ignorance and the love of accumulation, theſe are the two ſources of all the plagues that infeſt the life of man! They have inſpired him with falſe ideas of his happineſs, and prompted him to miſconſtrue and infringe the laws of nature, as they related to the connection between him and

exterior objects. Through them his conduct has been injurious to his own exiſtence, and he has thus violated the duty he owes to himſelf; they have fortified his heart againſt compaſſion, and his mind againſt the dictates of juſtice, and he has thus violated the duty he owes to others. By ignorance and inordinate deſire, man has armed himſelf againſt man, family againſt family, tribe againſt tribe, and the earth is converted into a bloody theatre of diſcord and robbery. They have ſown the ſeeds of ſecret war in the boſom of every ſtate, divided the citizens from each other, and the ſame ſociety is conſtituted of oppreſſors and oppreſſed, of maſters and ſlaves. They have taught the heads of nations, with audacious inſolence, to turn the arms of the ſociety againſt itſelf, and to build upon mercenary avidity the fabric of political deſpotiſm: or they have taught a more hypocritical and deep-laid project, that impoſed, as the dictate of heaven, lying ſanctions and a ſacrilegious yoke; thus rendering avarice the ſource of credulity. In fine, they have corrupted every idea of good and evil, juſt and unjuſt, virtue and vice: they have miſled nations

nations in a never-ending labyrinth of calamity and miſtake. Ignorance and the love of accumulation !.... Theſe are the malevolent beings that have laid waſte the earth; theſe are the decrees of fate that have overturned empires; theſe are the celeſtial maledictions that have ſtruck thoſe walls once ſo glorious, and converted the ſplendour of a populous city into a ſad ſpectacle of ruins !.... Since then it was from his own boſom all the evils proceeded that have vexed the life of man, it was there alſo he ought to have ſought the remedies, where only they are to be found.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

THE ORIGIN OF GOVERNMENT AND LAWS.

IN truth, the period ſoon arrived when men, tired of the ills they occaſioned each other, ſighed after peace; and reflecting on the nature and cauſes of thoſe ills, they ſaid: "We mutually injure one another by our "paſſions, and from a deſire to graſp every "thing we in reality poſſeſs nothing. What "one raviſhes to day, another tears from "him to-morrow, and our cupidity rebounds "upon our own heads. Let us eſtabliſh "arbitrators, who ſhall decide our claims and "appeaſe our variances. When the ſtrong "riſes up againſt the weak, the arbitrator "ſhall repel him; and the life and property of "each being under a common guarantee and "protection, we ſhall enjoy all the bleſſings "of nature."

Conventions, tacit or expreſſed, were thus introduced into ſociety, and became the rule of the actions of individuals, the meaſure of their

their claims, and the law of their reciprocal relations. Chiefs were appointed to enforce the obſervance of the compact, and to theſe the people entruſted the balance of rights, and the ſword to puniſh violations.

Then a happy equilibrium of powers and of action was eſtabliſhed, which conſtituted the public ſafety. The names of equity and juſtice were acknowledged and revered. Every man, able to enjoy in peace the fruits of his labour, gave himſelf up to all the energies of his ſoul; and activity, awakened and kept alive by the reality or the hope of enjoyment, forced art and nature to diſplay all their treaſures. The fields were covered with harveſts, the valleys with flocks, the hills with vines, the ſea with ſhips, and man was happy and powerful upon the earth.

The diſorder his imprudence had cauſed, his wiſdom thus remedied. But this wiſdom was ſtill the effect of the laws of nature in the organization of his being. It was to ſecure his own enjoyments, that he was led to reſpect thoſe of another, and the deſire of

accumulation found its corrective in enlightened ſelf-love.

Self-love, the eternal ſpring of action in every individual, was thus the neceſſary baſis of all aſſociations; and upon the obſervance of this natural law has the fate of every nation depended. Have the factitious and conventional laws of any ſociety accorded with this law, and correſponded to its demands? In that caſe every man, prompted by an overpowering inſtinct, has exerted all the faculties of his nature, and the public felicity has been the reſult of the various portions of individual felicity. Have theſe laws, on the contrary, reſtrained the effort of man in his purſuit of happineſs? In that caſe his heart, deprived of all its natural motives, has languiſhed in inaction, and the oppreſſion of individuals has engendered general weakneſs.

Self-love, impetuous and raſh, renders man the enemy of man, and of conſequence perpetually tends to the diſſolution of ſociety. It is for the art of legiſlation, and for the virtue of miniſters, to temper the graſping

ſelfiſhneſs of individuals, to keep each man's deſire to poſſeſs every thing in a nice equipoiſe, and thus to render the ſubjects happy, in order that, in the ſtruggle of this with any other ſociety, all the members ſhould have an equal intereſt in the preſervation and defence of the commonwealth.

From hence it follows, that the internal ſplendour and proſperity of empires, have been in proportion to the equity of their governments; and their external power reſpectively, in proportion to the number of perſons intereſted in the maintenance of the political conſtitution, and their degree of intereſt in that maintenance.

On the other hand, the multiplication of men by complicating their ties, having rendered the demarcation of their rights a point of difficult deciſion; the perpetual play of the paſſions having given riſe to unexpected incidents; the conventions that were formed having proved vicious, inadequate, or null; the authors of the laws having either miſunderſtood the object of them, or diſſembled it, and the perſons appointed to execute them, inſtead of reſtraining the inordinate

deſires of others, having abandoned themſelves to the ſway of their own avidity—ſociety has, by theſe cauſes united, been thrown into trouble and diſorder; and defective laws and unjuſt governments, the reſult of cupidity and ignorance, have been the foundation of the misfortunes of the people and the ſubverſion of ſtates.

CHAP. X.

GENERAL CAUSES OF THE PROSPERITY OF ANCIENT STATES.

SUCH, O man, who enquireſt after wiſdom, have been the cauſes of the revolutions of thoſe ancient ſtates of which you contemplate the ruins! Upon whatever ſpot I fix my view, or to whatever period my thoughts recur, the ſame principles of elevation and decline, of proſperity and deſtruction, preſent themſelves to the mind. If a people were powerful, if an empire flouriſhed, it was becauſe the laws of convention were conformable to thoſe of nature; becauſe the government procured to every man reſpectively the free uſe of his faculties, the equal ſecurity of his perſon and property. On the contrary, if an empire has fallen to ruin or diſappeared, it is becauſe the laws were vicious or imperfect, or a corrupt government has checked their operation. If laws and government, at firſt rational and juſt, have afterwards become

depraved, it is becauſe the alternative of good and evil derives from the nature of the heart of man, from the ſucceſſion of his inclinations, the progreſs of his knowledge, the combination of events and circumſtances; as the hiſtory of the human ſpecies proves.

In the infancy of nations, when men ſtill lived in foreſts, all ſubject to the ſame wants, and endowed with the ſame faculties, they were nearly equal in ſtrength; and this equality was a circumſtance highly advantageous in the formation of ſociety. Each individual finding himſelf independent of every other, no one was the ſlave, and no one had the idea of being maſter of another. Untaught man knew neither ſervitude nor tyranny. Supplied with the means of providing ſufficiency for his ſubſiſtence, he thought not of borrowing from ſtrangers. Owing nothing, and exacting nothing, he judged of the rights of others by his own. Ignorant alſo of the art of multiplying enjoyments, he provided only what was neceſſary; and ſuperfluity being unknown to him, the deſire to engroſs of conſequence remained unexcited; or if excited, as it attacked others

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in thoſe poſſeſſions that were wholly indiſpenſible, it was reſiſted with energy, and the very foreſight of this reſiſtance maintained a ſalutary and immoveable equilibrium.

Thus original equality, without the aid of convention, maintained perſonal liberty, ſecured individual property, and produced order and good manners. Each man laboured ſeparately and for himſelf: and his heart being occupied, he wandered not in purſuit of unlawful deſires. His enjoyments were few, but his wants were ſatisfied: and as nature had made theſe wants leſs extenſive than his ability, the labour of his hands ſoon produced abundance; abundance population; the arts developed themſelves, cultivation extended, and the earth, covered with numerous inhabitants, was divided into different domains.

The relations of men becoming complicated, the interior order of ſociety was more difficult to maintain. Time and induſtry having created affluence, cupidity awoke from its ſlumber; and as equality, eaſy between individuals, could not ſubſiſt between families, the national balance was deſtroyed.

It was neceſſary to ſupply the loſs by means of an artificial balance; it was neceſſary to appoint chiefs, and eſtabliſh laws; but as theſe were occaſioned by cupidity, in the experience of primitive times they could not but partake of the origin from which they ſprung. Various circumſtances however concurred to temper the diſorder, and make it indiſpenſible for governments to be juſt.

States being at firſt weak, and having external enemies to fear, it was in reality of importance to the chiefs not to oppreſs the ſubject. By diminiſhing the intereſt of the citizens in their government, they would have diminiſhed their means of reſiſtance; they would have facilitated foreign invaſion, and thus endangered their own exiſtence for ſuperfluous enjoyments.

Internally, the character of the people was repellent to tyranny. Men had too long contracted habits of independence; their wants were too limited, and the conſciouſneſs of their own ſtrength too inſeparable from their minds.

States being cloſely knit together, it was difficult to divide the citizens, in order to oppreſs

oppreſs ſome by means of others. Their communication with each other was too eaſy, and their intereſts too ſimple and evident. Beſide, every man being at once proprietor and cultivator, he had no inducement to ſell himſelf, and the deſpot would have been unable to find mercenaries.

If diſſentions aroſe, it was between family and family, one faction with another; and a conſiderable number had ſtill one common intereſt. Diſputes, it is true, were in this caſe more warm, but the fear of foreign invaſion appeaſed the diſcord. If the oppreſſion of a party was effected, the earth being open before it, and men, ſtill ſimple in their manners, finding every where the ſame advantages, the party migrated and carried their independence to another quarter.

Ancient ſtates then enjoyed in themſelves numerous means of proſperity and power.

As every man found his well-being in the conſtitution of his country, he felt a lively intereſt in its preſervation; and if a foreign power invaded it, having his habitation and his field to defend, he carried to the combat the ardour of a perſonal cauſe, and his patriotic

triotic exertions were prompted by ſelf-defence.

As every action uſeful to the public excited its eſteem and gratitude, each was eager to be uſeful, and talents and civil virtues were multiplied by ſelf-love.

As every citizen was called upon indiſcriminately to contribute his proportion of property and perſonal effort, the armies and the treaſuries of the ſtate were inexhauſtible.

As the earth was free, and its poſſeſſion eaſy and ſecure, every man was a proprietor, and the diviſion of property, by rendering luxury impoſſible, preſerved the purity of manners.

As every man ploughed his own field, cultivation was more active, proviſions more abundant, and individual opulence conſtituted the public wealth.

As abundance of proviſion rendered ſubſiſtence eaſy, population rapidly increaſed, and ſtates quickly arrived at their plenitude.

As the produce was greater than the conſumption, the deſire of commerce ſtarted up, and exchanges were made between different nations, which were an additional ſtimulus to

their activity, and increaſed their reciprocal enjoyments.

In fine, as certain places in certain epochas combined the advantage of good government with that of being placed in the road of circulation and commerce, they became rich magazines of trade, and powerful ſeats of dominion. It was in this manner that the riches of India and Europe, accumulated upon the banks of the Nile, the Tigris, and the Euphrates, gave ſucceſſive exiſtence to the ſplendour of a thouſand metropoliſſes.

The people, become rich, applied their ſuperfluity of means to labours of public utility; and this was, in every ſtate, the æra of thoſe works, the magnificence of which aſtoniſhes the mind; thoſe wells of Tyre (*i*), thoſe artificial banks of the Euphrates, thoſe conduits of Medea (*k*), thoſe fortreſſes of the Deſert, thoſe aqueducts of Palmyra, thoſe temples, thoſe porticos. . . . And theſe immenſe labours were little oppreſſive to the nations that completed them, becauſe they were the fruit of the equal and united effort of individuals free to act and ardent to deſire.

Thus

Thus ancient ſtates proſpered, becauſe ſocial inſtitutions were conformable to the true laws of nature, and becauſe the ſubjects of thoſe ſtates, enjoying liberty and the ſecurity of their perſons and their property, could diſplay all the extent of their faculties, and all the energy of ſelf-love.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

GENERAL CAUSES OF THE REVOLUTIONS AND RUIN OF ANCIENT STATES.

IN the mean time the inordinate desire of accumulation had excited a constant and universal struggle among men, and this struggle, prompting individuals and societies to reciprocal invasions, occasioned perpetual commotions and successive revolutions.

At first, in the savage and barbarous state of the first human beings, this inordinate desire, daring and ferocious in its nature, taught rapine, violence, and murder; and the progress of civilization was for a long time at a stand.

Afterwards, when societies began to be formed, the effect of bad habits communicating itself to laws and government, civil institutions became corrupt, and arbitrary and factitious rights were established, which gave the people depraved ideas of justice and morality.

Because

Becauſe one man, for example, was ſtronger than another, this inequality, the reſult of accident, was taken for the law of nature (*l*); and becauſe the life of the weak was in his power, and he did not take it from him, he arrogated over his perſon the abſurd right of property, and individual ſlavery prepared the way for the ſlavery of nations.

Becauſe the chief of a family could exerciſe an abſolute authority in his own houſe, he made his inclinations and affections the ſole rule of his conduct; he conferred and withheld the conveniences and enjoyments of life without reſpect to the law of equality or juſtice, and paternal tyranny laid the foundation of political deſpotiſm (*m*).

In ſocieties formed upon ſuch baſes, time and induſtry having developed riches, inordinate deſire, reſtricted by the laws, became artificial without being leſs active. Under the maſk of union and civil peace, it engendered in the boſom of every ſtate an inteſtine war, in which the citizens, divided into oppoſite corps of orders, claſſes, and families, aimed to appropriate to themſelves, under the name of *ſupreme power*, the ability

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of graſping and controlling every thing at the will of their paſſions. It is this ſpirit of rapacity, the diſguiſes of which are innumerable, but its operation and end uniformly the ſame, that has been the perpetual ſcourge of nations.

Sometimes oppoſing ſocial compact, or deſtroying that which already exiſted, it has abandoned the inhabitants of a country to the tumultuous ſhock of all their jarring principles; and the diſſolved ſtates, under the name of *anarchy*, have been tormented by the paſſions of every individual member.

Sometimes a people jealous of its liberty, having appointed agents to adminiſter, theſe agents have aſſumed to themſelves the powers of which they were only the guardians; have employed the public funds in corrupting elections, gaining partizans, and dividing the people againſt itſelf. By theſe means, from temporary, they have become perpetual, from elective, hereditary magiſtrates; and the ſtate, agitated by the intrigues of the ambitious, by the bribes of the wealthy leaders of factions, by the venality of the indolent poor, by the empiriciſm of declaim-

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ers, has been troubled with all the inconveniences of *democracy*.

In one country, the chiefs, equal in ſtrength, mutually afraid of each other, have formed vile compacts and coalitions, and portioning out power, rank, honours, have arrogated to themſelves privileges and immunities; have erected themſelves into ſeparate bodies and diſtinct claſſes; have tyranniſed in common over the people, and, under the name of *ariſtocracy*, the ſtate has been tormented by the paſſions of the wealthy and the great.

In another country, tending to the ſame end by different means, *ſacred impoſtors* have taken advantage of the credulity of the ignorant. In the ſecrecy of temples, and behind the veil of altars, they have made the Gods ſpeak and act; have delivered oracles, worked pretended miracles, ordered ſacrifices, impoſed offerings, preſcribed endowments; and, under the name of *theocracy* and *religion*, the ſtate has been tormented by the paſſions of prieſts.

Sometimes, weary of its diſorders or of its tyrants, a nation, to diminiſh the ſources of its evils, gave itſelf a ſingle maſter. In that caſe, if the powers of the prince were limited, his

his only desire was to extend them; if indefinite, he abused the trust that was confided to him; and, under the name of *monarchy*, the state was tormented by the passions of kings and princes.

Then the factious, taking advantage of the general discontent, flattered the people with the hope of a better master; they scattered gifts and promises, dethroned the despot to substitute themselves in his stead; and disputes for the succession or the division of power, have tormented the state with the disorders and devastations of *civil war*.

In fine, among these rivals, one individual more artful or more fortunate than the rest, gaining the ascendancy, concentred the whole power in himself. By a singular phenomenon, one man obtained the mastery over millions of his fellow-creatures, against their will, and without their consent; and thus the art of *tyranny* appears also to have been the offspring of inordinate desire. Observing the spirit of egotism that divided mankind, the ambitious adroitly fomented this spirit: he flattered the vanity of one, excited the jealousy of another, favoured the avarice of a

third, enflamed the reſentment of a fourth, irritated the paſſions of all. By oppoſing intereſts or prejudices, he ſowed the ſeeds of diviſions and hatred. He promiſed to the poor the ſpoil of the rich, to the rich the ſubjugation of the poor; threatened this man by that, one claſs by another; and iſolating the citizens by diſtruſt, he formed his own ſtrength out of their weakneſs, and impoſed on them the yoke of *opinion*, the knots of which they tied with their own hands. By means of the army he extorted contributions; by the contributions he diſpoſed of the army; by the correſponding play of money and places, he bound all the people with a chain that was not to be broken, and the ſtates which they compoſed fell into the ſlow decay of *deſpotiſm*.

Thus did one and the ſame ſpring, varying its action under all the forms that have been enumerated, inceſſantly attack the continuity of ſtates, and an eternal circle of viciſſitudes have ſprung from an eternal circle of paſſions.

This conſtant ſpirit of egotiſm operated two principal effects equally deſtructive: the one,

one, that by dividing ſocieties into all their fractions a ſtate of debility was produced which facilitated their diſſolution; the other, that always tending to concentre the power in a ſingle hand, it occaſioned a ſucceſſive abſorption of ſocieties and ſtates, fatal to their peace and to their common exiſtence (*n*).

Juſt as in a ſingle ſtate, the nation had been abſorbed in a party, that party in a family, and that family in an individual, there alſo exiſted an abſorption of a ſimilar kind between ſtate and ſtate, attended with all the miſchiefs in the relative ſituation of nations, that the other produced in the civil relation of individuals. One city ſubjected its neighbour city, and the reſult of the conqueſt was a province; province ſwallowed up province, and thus produced a kingdom; between two kingdoms a conqueſt took place, and thus furniſhed an empire of unweildy bulk. Did the internal force of theſe ſtates increaſe in proportion to their maſs? On the contrary, it was diminiſhed; and far from the condition of the people being happier, it became every day more oppreſſive and

wretched, by cauſes inevitably flowing from the nature of things.

Becauſe, as the boundaries of ſtates became extended, their adminiſtration became more complicated and difficult; and to give motion to the maſs it was neceſſary to increaſe the prerogatives of the ſovereign, and all proportion was thus annihilated between the duty of governors and their power.

Becauſe deſpots, feeling their weakneſs, dreaded all thoſe circumſtances that developed the force of nations, and made it their ſtudy to attenuate it.

Becauſe nations, eſtranged from each other by the prejudices of ignorance and the ferocity of hatred, ſeconded the perverſity of governments, and employing a ſtanding force for reciprocal offence, aggravated their ſlavery.

Becauſe, in proportion as the balance between ſtates was broken, it became eaſy for the ſtrong to overwhelm the weak.

Becauſe, in proportion as ſtate became blended with ſtate, the people were ſtripped of their laws, their cuſtoms, every thing by which they were diſtinguiſhed from each other,

other, and thus loſt the great mover *ſelfiſhneſs*, which gave them energy.

And deſpots, conſidering empires in the light of domains, and the people as their property, abandoned themſelves to depredations and the licentiouſneſs of the moſt arbitrary authority.

And all the force and wealth of nations were converted into a ſupply for individual expence and perſonal caprice; and kings in the weariſomeneſs of ſatiety, followed the dictates of every factitious and depraved taſte (*o*). They muſt have gardens conſtructed upon arches, and rivers carried to the ſummit of mountains; for them fertile fields muſt be changed into parks for deer, lakes formed where there was no water, and rocks elevated in thoſe lakes; they muſt have palaces conſtructed of marble and porphyry, and the furniture ornamented with gold and diamonds. Millions of hands were thus employed in ſterile labours; and the luxury of princes being imitated by their paraſites, and deſcending ſtep by ſtep to the loweſt ranks, became a general ſource of corruption and empoveriſhment.

And the ordinary tributes being no longer adequate to the inſatiable thirſt of enjoyment, they were augmented: the conſequence of which was, that the cultivator finding his toil increaſe without any indemnity, loſt his courage; the merchant ſeeing himſelf robbed, took a diſguſt to induſtry; the multitude condemned to a ſtate of poverty, exerted themſelves no farther than the procurement of neceſſaries required, and every ſpecies of productive activity was at a ſtand.

And the ſurcharge of taxes rendering the poſſeſſion of lands burthenſome, the humble proprietor abandoned his field, or ſold it to the man of opulence; and the maſs of wealth centered in a few individuals. As the laws and inſtitutions favoured this accumulation, nations were divided into a ſmall body of indolent rich, and a multitude of mercenary poor. The people, reduced to indigence, debaſed themſelves; the great, cloyed with ſuperfluity, became depraved; and the number of citizens intereſted in the preſervation of the ſtate decreaſing, its ſtrength and exiſtence were by ſo much the more precarious.

In

In another view, as there was nothing to excite emulation or encourage inſtruction, the minds of men ſunk into profound ignorance.

The adminiſtration of affairs being ſecret and myſterious, there exiſted no means of reform or hope of better times; and as the chiefs ruled only by violence and fraud, the people conſidered them but as a faction of public enemies, and all harmony between the governed and the governors was at an end.

The ſtates of opulent Aſia become enervated by all theſe vices, it happened at length that the vagrant and poor inhabitants of the deſerts and the mountains adjacent, coveted the enjoyments of the fertile plains, and inſtigated by a common cupidity, they attacked poliſhed empires, and overturned the thrones of deſpots. Such revolutions were rapid and eaſy, becauſe the policy of tyrants had enfeebled the citizens, razed the fortreſſes, deſtroyed the warlike ſpirit of reſiſtance, and becauſe the oppreſſed ſubject was without perſonal intereſt and the mercenary ſoldier without courage.

Hordes of barbarians having reduced whole

nations to a ſtate of ſlavery, it followed that empires, formed of a conquering and a vanquiſhed people, united in their boſom two claſſes of men eſſentially oppoſite and inimical to each other. All the principles of ſociety were diſſolved. There was no longer either a common intereſt, or public ſpirit: on the contrary, a diſtinction of caſts and conditions was eſtabliſhed, that reduced the maintenance of diſorder to a regular ſyſtem; and accordingly as a man was deſcended from this or that blood, he was born vaſſal or tyrant, live ſtock or proprietor.

The oppreſſors being in this caſe leſs numerous than the oppreſſed, it became neceſſary, in order to ſupport this falſe equilibrium, to bring the ſcience of tyranny to perfection. The art of governing was now nothing more than that of ſubjecting the many to the few. To obtain an obedience ſo contrary to inſtinct, it was neceſſary to eſtabliſh the moſt ſevere penalties; and the cruelty of the laws rendered the manners atrocious. The diſtinction of perſons alſo eſtabliſhing in the ſtate two codes of juſtice, two ſpecies of rights, the people, placed between

between the natural inclinations of their hearts and the oath they were obliged to pronounce, had two contradictory conſciences; and their ideas of juſt and unjuſt had no longer any foundation in the underſtanding.

Under ſuch a ſyſtem the people fell into a ſtate of depreſſion and deſpair; and the accidents of nature increaſing the preponderance of evil, terrified at this groupe of calamities, they referred the cauſes of them to ſuperior and inviſible powers: becauſe they had tyrants upon earth, they ſuppoſed there to be tyrants in heaven; and ſuperſtition came in aid to aggravate the diſaſters of nations.

Hence originated gloomy and miſanthropic ſyſtems of religion, which painted the Gods malignant and envious like human deſpots. To appeaſe them, man offered the ſacrifice of all his enjoyments, puniſhed himſelf with privations, and overturned the laws of nature. Conſidering his pleaſures as crimes, his ſufferings as expiations, he endeavoured to cheriſh a paſſion for pain, and to renounce ſelf-love; he perſecuted his ſenſes, deteſted

deteſted his life, and by a ſelf-denying and unſocial ſyſtem of morals, nations were plunged in the ſluggiſhneſs of death.

But as provident nature had endowed the heart of man with inexhauſtible hope, perceiving his deſires diſappointed of happineſs here, he purſued it elſewhere; by a ſweet illuſion, he formed to himſelf another country, an aſylum, where, out of the reach of tyrants, he ſhould regain all his rights. Hence a new diſorder aroſe. Smitten with his imaginary world, man deſpiſed the world of nature: for chimerical hopes he neglected the reality. He no longer conſidered his life but as a fatiguing journey, a painful dream; his body as a priſon that withheld him from his felicity; the earth as a place of exile and pilgrimage, which he diſdained to cultivate. A ſacred ſloth then eſtabliſhed itſelf in the world; the fields were deſerted, waſte lands increaſed, empires were diſpeopled, monuments neglected, and every where ignorance, ſuperſtition and fanaticiſm, uniting their baleful effects, multiplied deva-ſtations and ruins.

Thus, agitated by their own paſſions, men, whether

whether in their individual capacity, or as collective bodies, always rapacious and improvident, paſſing from tyranny to ſlavery, from pride to abjectneſs, from preſumption to deſpair, have been themſelves the eternal inſtruments of their misfortunes.

Such was the ſimplicity of the principles that regulated the fate of ancient ſtates; ſuch was the ſeries of cauſes and effects, conſecutive and connected with each other, according to which they roſe or fell in the ſcale of human welfare, juſt as the phyſical cauſes of the human heart were therein obſerved or infringed. A hundred divers nations, a hundred powerful empires in their inceſſant viciſſitudes have read again and again theſe inſtructive leſſons to mankind... And theſe leſſons are mute and forgotten! The diſeaſes of paſt times have appeared again in the preſent! The heads of the different governments have practiſed again without reſtraint exploded projects of deception and deſpotiſm! The people have wandered as before in the labyrinths of ſuperſtition and ignorance!

And what, added the Genius, calling up his

his energies afreſh, is the conſequence of all this? Since experience is uſeleſs, ſince ſalutary examples are forgotten, the ſcenes which were acted before are now about to be renewed; revolutions will again agitate people and empires; powerful thrones will, as before, be overturned; and terrible cataſtrophes remind the human ſpecies, that the laws of nature and the precepts of wiſdom and truth cannot be trampled upon in vain.

CHAP. XII.

LESSONS TAUGHT BY ANCIENT, REPEATED IN MODERN TIMES.

IN this manner did the Genius addreſs me. Struck with the reaſonableneſs and coherence of his diſcourſe, and a multiplicity of ideas crowding upon my mind, which, while they thwarted my habits, led my judgment at the ſame time captive, I remained abſorbed in profound ſilence. Meanwhile, as in this ſombre and thoughtful diſpoſition I kept my eyes fixed upon Aſia, clouds of ſmoke and of flames at the north, on the ſhores of the Black Sea, and in the fields of the Crimea, ſuddenly atracted my attention. They appeared to aſcend at once from every part of the peninſula, and paſſing by the iſthmus to the continent, they purſued their courſe, as if driven by an eaſterly wind, along the miry lake of Aſoph, and were loſt in the verdant plains of the Coban. Obſerving more attentively the courſe of theſe clouds, I perceived

ceived that they were preceded or followed by ſwarms of living beings, which, like ants diſturbed by the foot of a paſſenger, were in lively action. Sometimes they ſeemed to move towards and ruſh againſt each other, and numbers after the concuſſion remained motionleſs. Diſquieted at this ſpectacle, I was endeavouring to diſtinguiſh the objects, when the Genius ſaid to me: Do you ſee thoſe fires which ſpread over the earth, and are you acquainted with their cauſes and effects?—O Genius, I replied, I ſee columns of flame and ſmoke, and as it were inſects that accompany them; but diſcerning with difficulty, as I do, the maſſes of towns and monuments, how can I diſtinguiſh ſuch petty creatures? I can ſee nothing more than that theſe inſects ſeem to carry on a ſort of mock battles; they advance, they approach towards each other, they attack, they purſue.—It is no mockery, ſaid the Genius, it is the thing itſelf. ——And what name, replied I, ſhall we give to theſe fooliſh animalculæ that deſtroy each other? Do they live only for a day, and is this ſhort life further abridged by violence and murder?—The Genius then once more touched my

eyes and my ears. Liſten, ſaid he to me, and obſerve.——Immediately, turning my eyes in the ſame direction, alas! ſaid, I, tranſpierced with anguiſh, theſe columns of flame, theſe inſects, O Genius! they are men, and the ravages of war! Theſe torrents of flame aſcend from towns and villages ſet on fire! I ſee the horſemen that light them. I ſee them ſword in hand over-run the country. Old men, women, and children, in confuſed multitudes, fly before them. I ſee other horſemen, who with their pikes upon their ſhoulders, accompany and direct them: I can even diſtinguiſh by their led horſes, by their *kalpacks*, and by their tufts of hair (*p*), that they are Tartars; and without doubt thoſe who purſue them in triangular hats and green uniforms are Muſcovites. I underſtand the whole: I perceive that the war has juſt broken out afreſh between the empire of the Czars and the Sultans.—Not yet, replied the Genius; this is only the prelude. Theſe Tartars have been and would ſtill be troubleſome neighbours; the Muſcovites are ridding themſelves of them. Their country is an object of convenience to their leſs uncivilized

civilized enemies; it rounds and makes complete their dominions; and as the firſt ſtep in the project that has been conceived, the throne of the Guerais is overturned.

In reality I ſaw the Ruſſian flag hoiſted over the Crimea, and their veſſels ſcattered upon the Euxine.

Meanwhile, at the cries of the fugitive Tartars, the Muſſulman empire was in commotion. "Our brethren," exclaimed the children of Mahomet, "are driven from their "habitations; the people of the prophet "are outraged; infidels are in poſſeſſion of "a conſecrated land (*q*), and profane the "temples of Iſlamiſm! Let us arm our-"ſelves to avenge the glory of God and "our own cauſe."

A general preparation for war then took place in the two empires. Armed men, proviſions, ammunition, and all the murderous accoutrements of battle were every where aſſembled. My attention was particularly attracted by the immenſe crowds that in either nation thronged to the temples. On one ſide the Muſſulmans, aſſembled before their moſques, waſhed their hands and feet,

pared

pared their nails, and combed their beard: then ſpreading carpets upon the ground, and turning themſelves towards the ſouth, with their arms ſometimes croſſed and ſometimes extended, they performed their genuflections and proſtrations. Recollecting the diſaſters they had experienced during the laſt war, they cried: "God of clemency and pity, "haſt thou then abandoned thy faithful "people? Why doſt thou, who has pro-"miſed to thy prophet the dominion of "nations, and ſignalized religion by ſo many "triumphs, deliver up true believers to the "ſword of infidels?" And the Imans and the Santons ſaid to the people: "It is the chaſ-"tiſement of your ſins. You eat pork, you "drink wine, you touch things that are un-"clean: God has puniſhed you. Do penance; "purify yourſelves; ſay your creed*; faſt "from the riſing of the ſun to its ſetting; "give the tenth of your goods to the "moſques; go to Mecca, and God will "make your arms victorious." Then, aſ-ſuming courage, the people gave a general

* There is but one God, and Mahomet is his prophet.

 ſhout.

ΑΑ. ΙΛΙΑ ΕΛ ΥΛΛΑ
ΜΑ'ΟΜΕΤ ΡΑΣΟΥΛ ΥΛΛΑ

ſhout. "There is but one God," ſaid they in a tranſport of rage, "and Mahomet is "his prophet! accurſed be every one that "believeth not!....Indulgent God! grant "us the favour to exterminate theſe Chriſ- "tians: it is for thy glory we fight, and by "our death we are martyrs to thy name."— And having offered ſacrifices, they prepared themſelves for battle.

On the other hand, the Ruſſians on their knees exclaimed: "Let us give thanks to "God, and celebrate his power: he has "ſtrengthened our arm to humble his ene- "mies. Beneficent God! incline thine ear "to our prayers. To pleaſe thee we will "for three days eat neither meat nor eggs. "Permit us to exterminate theſe impious "Mahometans, and overthrow their empire, "and we will give thee the tenth of the "ſpoil, and erect new temples to thy honour." The prieſts then filled the churches with ſmoke, and ſaid to the people: "We pray "for you, and God accepts our incenſe, and "bleſſes your arms. Continue to faſt and "to fight; tell us the faults you have ſecretly "committed; beſtow your goods on the "church;

"church; we will abſolve you of your ſins, "and you ſhall die in a ſtate of grace." And they ſprinkled water on the people, diſtributed among them little bones of departed ſaints to ſerve as amulets and taliſmans; and the people breathed nothing but war and deſtruction.

Struck with this contraſting picture of the ſame paſſions, and lamenting to myſelf their pernicious conſequences, I was reflecting on the difficulty the common Judge would find in complying with ſuch oppoſite demands, when the Genius, from an impulſe of anger, vehemently exclaimed:

What madneſs is this which ſtrikes my ear? What blind and fatal infanity poſſeſſes the human mind? Sacrilegious prayers, return to the earth from whence you came! Ye concave heavens, repel theſe murderous vows, theſe impious thankſgivings! Is it thus, O man, you worſhip the Divinity? And do you think that he, whom you call Father of all, can receive with complacence the homage of free-booters and murderers? Ye conquerors, with what ſentiments does he behold your arms reeking with blood that he

has created? Ye conquered, what hope can you place in uſeleſs moans? Is he a man that he ſhould change, or the ſon of man that he ſhould repent? Is he governed like you by vengeance and compaſſion, by rage and by wearineſs! Baſe idea, how much unworthy of the Being of Beings! Hear theſe men, and you would imagine that God is a Being capricious and mutable; that now he loves, and now he hates; that he chaſtiſes one, and indulges another; that hatred is engendered and nouriſhed in his boſom; that he ſpreads ſnares for men, and delights in the fatal effects of imprudence; that he permits ill, and puniſhes it; that he foreſees guilt, and acquieſces; that he is to be bought with gifts like a partial judge; that he reverſes his edicts like an undiſcerning deſpot; that he gives and revokes his favours becauſe it is his will, and is to be appeaſed only by ſervility like a ſavage tyrant, I now completely underſtand what is the deceit of mankind, who have pretended that God made man in his own image, and who have really made God in theirs; who have aſcribed to him their weakneſs, their errors, and their vices; and

in the concluſion, ſurprized at the contradictory nature of their own aſſertions, have attempted to cloke it with hypocritical humility, and the pretended impotence of human reaſon, calling the delirium of their own underſtandings the ſacred myſteries of heaven.

They have ſaid, God is without variableneſs, and they pray to him to change. They have ſaid that he is incomprehenſible, and they have undertaken to be interpreters of his will.

A race of impoſtors has made its appearance upon the earth, who, pretending to be in the confidence of God, and taking upon themſelves the office of inſtructing the people, have opened the flood-gates of falſehood and iniquity. They have affixed merit to actions which either are indifferent or abſurd. They have dignified with the appellation of virtue the obſervance of certain poſtures, and the repetition of certain words and names. They have taught the impiety of eating certain meats on certain days rather than on others. It is thus the Jew would ſooner die than work on the ſabbath. It is thus the Perſian

would endure ſuffocation before he would blow the fire with his breath. It is thus the Indian places ſupreme perfection in ſmearing himſelf with cow-dung, and myſteriouſly pronouncing the word *Aûm* (*r*). It is thus the Muſſulman believes himſelf purified from all his ſins by the ablution of his head and his arms; and diſputes, ſabre in hand, whether he ought to begin the ceremony at the elbow (*s*) or the points of his fingers. It is thus the Chriſtian would believe himſelf damned, were he to eat the juice of animal food inſtead of milk or butter. What ſublime and truly celeſtial doctrines! What purity of morals, and how worthy of apoſtleſhip and martyrdom! I will croſs the ſeas to teach theſe admirable laws to ſavage people and diſtant nations. I will ſay to them: "Children of nature, how long will "you wander in the paths of ignorance? "How long will you be blind to the true "principles of morality and religion? Viſit "civilized nations, and take leſſons of pious "and learned people. They will teach you, "that, to pleaſe God, you muſt in certain "months of the year faint all day with "hunger

" hunger and thirſt. They will teach you " how you may ſhed the blood of your " neighbour, and purify yourſelves from the " ſtain, by repeating a profeſſion of faith, " and making a methodical ablution: how " you may rob him of his goods, and be " abſolved from the guilt, by ſharing them " with certain perſons, whoſe profeſſion it " is to live in idleneſs upon the labour of " others."

Sovereign and myſterious Power of the Univerſe! ſecret Mover of Nature! univerſal Soul of every thing that lives! infinite and incomprehenſible Being, whom, under ſo many forms, mortals have ignorantly worſhipped! God, who in the immenſity of the heavens doſt guide revolving worlds, and people the abyſs of ſpace with millions of ſuns: ſay, what appearance do thoſe human inſects, which I can with difficulty diſtinguiſh upon the earth, make in thy eyes? When thou directeſt the ſtars in their orbits, what to thee are the worms that crawl in the duſt? Of what importance to thy infinite greatneſs are their diſtinctions of ſects and

parties? And how art thou concerned with the ſubtleties engendered by their folly?

And you, credulous men, ſhew me the efficacy of your practices! During the many ages that you have obſerved or altered them, what change have your *preſcriptions* wrought in the laws of nature? Has the ſun ſhone with greater brilliance? Has the courſe of the ſeaſons at all varied? Is the earth more fruitful, are the people more happy? If God be good, how can he be pleaſed with your penances? If he be infinite, what can your homage add to his glory? Inconſiſtent men, anſwer theſe queſtions!

Ye conquerors, who pretend by your arms to ſerve God, what need has he of your aid? If he wiſhes to puniſh, are not earthquakes, volcanos, and the thunderbolt in his hand? And does a God of clemency know no other way of correcting but by extermination?

Ye Muſſulmans, if your misfortunes were the chaſtiſements of heaven for the violation of the *five precepts*, would proſperity be ſhowered on the Franks who laugh at theſe things? If it is by the laws of the Koran that God judges the earth, what were the principles

principles by which he governed the nations that exiſted before the prophet, the numerous people who drank wine, ate pork, and travelled not to Mecca, yet to whom it was given to raiſe powerful empires? By what laws did he judge the Sabeans of Nineveh and of Babylon; the Perſian, who worſhipped fire; the Greek and Roman idolaters; the ancient kingdoms of the Nile, and your own progenitors the Arabs and Tartars? How does he at preſent judge the various nations that are ignorant of your worſhip, the numerous caſts of Indians, the vaſt empire of the Chineſe, the ſwarthy tribes of Africa, the Iſlanders of the Atlantic Ocean, the colonies of America!

Preſumptuous and ignorant men, who arrogate to yourſelves the whole earth, were God to ſummon at once all paſt and preſent generations, what proportion would thoſe Chriſtian and Muſſulman ſects, calling themſelves *univerſal*, bear in the vaſt aſſemblage? What would be the judgment of his fair and impartial juſtice reſpecting the actual maſs of mankind? It is in eſtimating the general ſyſtem of his government that you wander among

among multiplied abſurdities; and it is there that, in reality, truth preſents itſelf in all its evidence. It is there that we trace the ſimple but powerful laws of nature and reaſon; the laws of the common mover, the general cauſe; of a God impartial and juſt, who, that he might ſend his rain upon a country, aſks not who is its prophet; who cauſes his ſun equally to ſhine on all tribes of men, whether diſtinguiſhed by a fair or a ſable complexion, on the Jew as on the Muſſulman, on the Chriſtian as on the Heathen; who multiplies the inhabitants of every country with whom order and induſtry reign; who gives proſperity to every empire where juſtice is obſerved, where the powerful is reſtrained, and the poor man protected by the laws; where the weak lives in ſafety, and where all enjoy the rights which they derive from nature and an equitable compact.

Such are the principles by which nations are judged! This is the true religion by which the fate of empires is regulated, and which, O Ottomans, has ever decided that of your own empire! Interrogate your anceſtors; aſk them by what means they roſe

to

to greatneſs, when, idolaters, few in number and poor, they came from the deſerts of Tartary to encamp in theſe fertile countries? Aſk them if it was by iſlamiſm, at that period unknown to them, that they conquered the Greeks and Arabs; or by their courage, prudence, moderation, and unanimity, the true powers of the ſocial ſtate? Then the Sultan himſelf adminiſtered juſtice and maintained order: then the prevaricating judge and the rapacious governor were puniſhed, and the multitude lived in eaſe: the cultivator was ſecure from the rapine of the janizary, and the fields were productive: the public roads were ſafe, and commerce flouriſhed. It is true you were a league of robbers, but among yourſelves you were juſt. You ſubjugated nations, but you did not oppreſs them. Vexed by their own princes, they preferred being your tributaries. "Of what importance is it to me, ſaid the "Chriſtian, whether my maſter be pleaſed "with images or breaks them in pieces, "provided he is juſt towards me? God will "judge his doctrine in heaven." You were temperate and hardy; your enemies ſoft and effeminate:

effeminate: you were ſkilled in the art of battle; they had forgotten its principles: you had experienced chiefs, warlike and diſciplined troops; the hope of booty excited ardour; bravery was recompenſed; diſobedience and cowardice puniſhed; and all the ſprings of the human heart were in action. You thus conquered a hundred nations, and out of the maſs founded an immenſe empire.

But other manners ſucceeded. The laws of nature, however, did not leſs operate in your misfortunes than in your proſperity. You deſtroyed your enemies, and your graſping ambition, ſtill in force, preyed upon yourſelves. Having become rich, you commenced an internal conteſt reſpecting the diviſion and the enjoyment of your riches, and diſorder was generated through every claſs of your ſociety. The Sultan, intoxicated with his greatneſs, miſunderſtood the object of his functions, and all the vices of arbitrary power preſently unfolded themſelves. Meeting with no obſtacle to his deſires, he became a depraved character. Weak, and arrogant at the ſame time, he ſpurned the people, and would no longer be influenced and directed by their voice.

voice. Ignorant, and yet flattered, he neglected all inſtruction, all ſtudy, and ſunk into total incapacity. Become himſelf unqualified for the conduct of affairs, he committed the truſt to hirelings, and theſe hirelings deceived him. To ſatisfy their own paſſions, they ſtimulated and increaſed his; they multiplied his wants, and his enormous luxury devoured every thing. He was no longer content with the frugal table, the modeſt attire, and the ſimple habitation of his anceſtors: the earth and ſea muſt be exhauſted to ſatisfy his pride; ſcarce furs muſt be fetched from the pole, and coſtly tiſſues from the equator; he conſumed at a meal the tribute of a city, and in a day the revenue of a province. He became infeſted with an army of women, eunuchs, and courtiers. He was told that the virtue of kings conſiſted in liberality; and the munificence and treaſures of the people were delivered into the hands of paraſites. In imitation of the maſter, the ſlaves were alſo deſirous of having magnificent houſes, furniture of exquiſite workmanſhip, carpets richly embroidered, vaſes of gold and ſilver for the vileſt uſes; and all the

the wealth of the empire was ſwallowed up in the *Seraï*.

To ſupply this inordinate luxury the ſlaves and the women ſold their influence; and venality introduced a general depravation. They ſold the favour of the prince to the Viſier, and the Viſier ſold the empire. They ſold the law to the Cadi, and the Cadi ſold juſtice. They ſold the altar to the prieſt, and the prieſt ſold heaven. And gold obtaining every thing, nothing was left unpractiſed to obtain gold. For gold, friend betrayed friend; the child his father; the ſervant his maſter; the wife her honour; the merchant his conſcience; and there no longer exiſted in the ſtate either good faith, manners, concord or ſtability.

The Pacha, who purchaſed his office, preſently had recourſe to the ſyſtem of farming it for a revenue, and exerciſing upon it every ſpecies of extortion. He ſold the collection of the taxes, the command of the troops, the adminiſtration of the diſtricts; and in proportion as every employment was temporary, rapine, diffuſing itſelf from rank to rank, was rapid and precipitate. The exciſeman op-

preſſed the merchant by his exactions, and trade was annihilated. The Aga ſtript the huſbandman, and cultivation was degraded. The labourer, robbed of his little capital, had not wherewith to ſow his field: taxes nevertheleſs became due, and he was unable to pay them; he was threatened with corporal puniſhment, and driven to the expedient of a loan: ſpecie, for want of ſecurity, was withdrawn from circulation; the intereſt of money became enormous, and uſury aggravated the miſery of the poor.

Inclement ſeaſons, periods of dearth, had rendered the harveſts abortive, but government would neither forgive nor poſtpone its demands. Diſtreſs began its career; a part of the inhabitants of the villages took refuge in the cities; the burthen upon thoſe that remained became greater, their ruin was conſummated, and the country depopulated.

Driven to the laſt extremity by tyranny and inſult, certain villages broke out into rebellion. The Pacha conſidered the event as a ſubject of rejoicing; he made war upon them, took their houſes by ſtorm, ranſacked their goods, and carried off their cattle. The

ſoil

ſoil became a deſert, and he exclaimed: "What care I; I ſhall be removed from it "to-morrow."

Yet again, the want of cultivation led one ſtep farther. Periodical rains or ſwelling tides, overflowed the banks and covered the country with ſwamps: theſe ſwamps exhaled a putrid air, which ſpread chronical diſeaſes, peſtilence, and ſickneſs of a thouſand forms, and was followed by a ſtill farther decreaſe of population, by penury and ruin.

Oh! who can enumerate all the evils of this tyrannical ſyſtem of government!

Sometimes the Pachas make war of themſelves, and, to avenge their perſonal quarrels, provinces are laid waſte. Sometimes, dreading their maſters, they aim at independence, and draw upon their ſubjects the chaſtiſement of their revolt. Sometimes, fearing theſe very ſubjects, they call to their aid and keep in pay foreign troops, and to be ſure of them, they indulge them in every kind of robbery. In one place, they commence an action againſt a rich man, and plunder him upon falſe pretences. In another, they ſuborn witneſſes, and impoſe a fine

fine for an imaginary offence. On all occaſions they excite the hatred of ſects againſt each other, and encourage informations for the ſake of increaſing their own corrupt advantages. They extort from men their property; they attack their perſons; and when their imprudent avarice has heaped into one maſs the riches of a province, the ſupreme government, with execrable perfidy, pretending to avenge the oppreſſed inhabitants, draws to itſelf their ſpoil in the ſpoil of the culprit, and wantonly and vainly expiate in blood the crime of which it was itſelf the accomplice.

O iniquitous beings, ſovereigns or miniſters, who ſport with the life and property of the people! was it you who gave breath to man, that you take it from him? Is it you who fertilize the earth, that you diſſipate its fruits? Do you fatigue your arms with ploughing the field? Do you expoſe yourſelves to the heat of the ſun, and endure the torment of thirſt in cutting down the harveſt and binding it into ſheaves? Do you watch like the ſhepherd in the nocturnal

dew? Do you traverſe deſerts like the indefatigable merchant? Alas! when I have reflected on the cruelty and inſolence of the powerful, my indignation has been rouſed, and I have ſaid in my anger: What! will there never appear upon the earth a race of men who ſhall avenge the people and puniſh tyrants! A ſmall number of robbers devour the multitude, and the multitude ſuffer themſelves to be devoured! O degraded people, awake to the recognition of your rights! authority proceeds from you, yours is all the power. Vainly do kings command you *in the name of God* and *by their lance:* ſoldiers, obey not the ſummons. Since God ſupports the Sultan, your ſuccour is uſeleſs; ſince the ſword of heaven ſuffices him, he has no need of yours; let us ſee what he can do of himſelf....The ſoldiers have laid down their arms; and lo, the maſters of the world are as feeble as the meaneſt of their ſubjects! Ye people, know then that thoſe who govern you are your chiefs and not your maſters; your guardians appointed by yourſelves, and not your proprietors; that your wealth is

your

your own, and to you they are accountable for the adminiſtration of it; that kings or ſubjects, God has made all men equal, and no human being has a right to oppreſs his fellow-creature.

But this nation and its chiefs acknowledge not theſe ſacred truths.... Be it ſo; they will ſuffer the conſequences of their error. The decree is gone forth; the day approaches when this coloſſus of power ſhall be daſhed to pieces, and fall cruſhed by its own weight. Yes, I ſwear by the ruins of ſo many demoliſhed empires, that the creſcent ſhall undergo the ſame fate as the ſtates whoſe mode of government it has imitated! A foreign people ſhall drive the Sultans from their metropolis; the throne of Orkhan ſhall be ſubverted; the laſt ſhoot of his race ſhall be cut off; and the horde of the Oguzians (*t*), deprived of their chief, ſhall be diſperſed like that of the Nogaians. In this diſſolution the ſubjects of the empire, freed from the yoke that held them together, will reſume their ancient diſtinctions, and a general anarchy will take place, as happened in the em-

pire of the Sophis (*u*), till there ſhall ariſe among the Arabs, the Armenians, or the Greeks, legiſlators who ſhall form new ſtates. Oh! were a ſagacious and hardy race of men to be found, what materials of greatneſs and glory are here!.... But the hour of deſtiny is arrived. The cry of war ſtrikes my ear, and the cataſtrophe is about to commence. In vain the Sultan draws out his armies; his ignorant ſoldiers are beaten and ſcattered. In vain he calls upon his ſubjects: their hearts are callous; his ſubjects reply: "It is de-"creed; and what is it to us who is to be "our maſter? we cannot loſe by the change." In vain theſe true believers invoke heaven and the prophet, the prophet is dead, and heaven without pity anſwers: "Ceaſe to call "upon me. You are the authors of your "calamities, find yourſelves their remedy. "Nature has eſtabliſhed laws, it becomes "you to practiſe them. Examine and re-"flect upon the events that take place, and "profit by experience. It is the folly of "man that works his deſtruction; it is his "wiſdom that muſt ſave him. The people

" are ignorant; let them get underſtanding:
" their chiefs are depraved; let them correct
" their vices and amend their lives, for ſuch
" is the decree of nature: *Since the evils of*
" *ſociety flow from* IGNORANCE *and* INORDI-
" NATE DESIRE, *men will never ceaſe to be*
" *tormented till they ſhall become intelligent and*
" *wiſe; till they ſhall practiſe the art of juſtice,*
" *founded on a knowledge of the various rela-*
" *tions in which they ſtand, and the laws of*
" *their own organization* *."

CHAP.

* A ſingular moral phenomenon made its appearance in Europe in the year 1788. A great nation, jealous of its liberty, contracted a fondneſs for a nation the enemy of liberty; a nation friendly to the arts for a nation that deteſts them; a mild and tolerant nation for a perſecuting and fanatic one; a ſocial and gay nation for a nation whoſe characteriſtic are gloom and miſanthropy; in a word, the French were ſmitten with a paſſion for the Turks: they were deſirous of engaging in a war for them, and that at a time when a revolution in their own country was juſt at its commencement. A man who perceived the true nature of the ſituation, wrote a book to diſſuade them from the war: it was immediately pretended that he was paid by the government, which in reality wiſhed the war, and which was upon the point of ſhutting him up in a ſtate priſon. Another man wrote to

CHAP. XIII.

WILL THE HUMAN RACE BE EVER IN A BETTER CONDITION THAN AT PRESENT?

OPPRESSED with ſorrow at the predictions of the Genius, and the ſeverity of his reaſoning: Unhappy nations, cried I, burſt-

recommend the war: he was applauded, and his word was taken in payment for the ſcience, the politeneſs and importance of the Turks. It is true that he believed in his own theſis, for he had found among them people who caſt a nativity, and alchemiſts who ruined his fortune; as he found Martiniſts at Paris, who enabled him to ſup with Seſoſtris, and Magnetiſers who concluded with deſtroying his exiſtence. Notwithſtanding this, the Turks were beaten by the Ruſſians, and the man who then predicted the fall of their empire, perſiſts in the prediction. The reſult of this fall will be a complete change of the political ſyſtem, as far as it relates to the coaſt of the Mediterranean. If, however, the French become important in proportion as they become free, and if they make uſe of the advantage they will obtain, their progreſs may eaſily prove of the moſt honourable ſort, inaſmuch as, by the wiſe decrees of fate, the true intereſt of mankind evermore accords with their true morality.

ing

ing into tears! Unhappy my own lot! I now deſpair of the felicity of man! ſince his evils flow from his own heart, ſince he muſt himſelf apply the remedy, woe for ever to his exiſtence! For what can reſtrain the inordinate deſire of the powerful? Who ſhall enlighten the ignorance of the weak? Who inſtruct the multitude in the knowledge of its rights, and force the chiefs to diſcharge the duties of their ſtation? Individual will not ceaſe to oppreſs individual, one nation to attack another nation, and never will the day of proſperity and glory again dawn upon theſe countries. Alas! conquerors will come; they will drive away the oppreſſors, and will eſtabliſh themſelves in their place; but, ſucceeding to their power, they will ſucceed alſo to their rapacity, and the earth will have changed its tyrants, without leſſening the tyranny.

Then turning towards the Genius: O Genius! ſaid I, deſpair has taken hold of my heart. While you have inſtructed me in the nature of man, the depravity of governors, and the abjectneſs of thoſe who

are governed, have given me a diſguſt to life; and ſince there is no alternative but to be the accomplice or the victim of oppreſſion, what has the virtuous man to do but to join his aſhes to thoſe of the tombs!

The Genius, fixing upon me a look of ſeverity mixed with compaſſion, was ſilent. After a few minutes he replied: Is it then in dying that virtue conſiſts? The wicked man is indefatigable in the conſummation of vice, and the juſt diſheartened at the firſt obſtacle which ſtands in the way of doing good! .... But ſuch is the human heart: ſucceſs intoxicates it to preſumption, diſappointment dejects and terrifies it. Always the victim of the ſenſation of the moment, it judges not of things by their nature but by the impulſe of paſſion .... Mortal, who deſpaireſt of the human race, upon what profound calculation of reaſonings and events is your judgment formed? Have you ſcrutinized the organization of ſenſible beings, to determine with preciſion whether the ſprings that incline them to happineſs are weaker than thoſe which repel? or rather,

viewing

viewing at a glance the hiſtory of the ſpecies, and judging of the future by the example of the paſt, have you hence diſcovered with certainty, that all proficiency is impoſſible? Let me aſk: Have ſocieties, ſince their origin, made no ſtep towards inſtruction and a better ſtate of things? Are men ſtill in the woods, deſtitute of every thing, ignorant, ſtupid, and ferocious? Are there no nations advanced beyond the period, when nothing was to be ſeen upon the face of the globe but ſavage freebooters or ſavage ſlaves? If individuals have at certain times, and in certain places, become better, why ſhould not the maſs improve? If particular ſocieties have attained a conſiderable degree of perfection, why ſhould not the progreſs of the general ſociety advance? If firſt obſtacles have been overcome, why ſhould ſucceeding ones be inſurmountable?

But you are of opinion that the human race is degenerating? Guard yourſelf againſt the illuſion and paradoxes of miſanthropy. Diſſatisfied with the preſent, man ſuppoſes in the paſt a perfection which does not exiſt, and

and which is merely the diſcoloration of his chagrin. He praiſes the dead from enmity to the living, and employs the bones of the fathers as an inſtrument of chaſtiſement againſt the children.

To eſtabliſh this principle of a retrograde perfection, it is neceſſary that we ſhould contradict the teſtimony of facts and reaſon. Nor is this all; the facts of hiſtory might indeed be equivocal, but it is farther neceſſary that we ſhould contradict the living fact of the nature of man; that we ſhould aſſert that he is born with a perfect ſcience in the uſe of his ſenſes; that, previous to experience, he is able to diſtinguiſh poiſon from aliment; that the ſagacity of the infant is greater than that of his bearded progenitor; that the blind man can walk with more aſſurance than the man endued with ſight; that man, the creature of civilization, is leſs favoured by circumſtances than the cannibal; in a word, that there is no truth in the exiſting gradation of inſtruction and experience.

Young man, believe the voice of tombs

and the teſtimony of monuments. There are countries which have doubtleſs fallen off from what they were at certain epochas: but if the underſtanding were to analyſe thoroughly the wiſdom and felicity of their inhabitants at thoſe periods, their glory would be found to have leſs of reality than of ſplendour; it would be ſeen, that even in the moſt celebrated ſtates of antiquity, there exiſted enormous vices and cruel abuſes, the preciſe cauſe of their inſtability; that in general the principles of government were atrocious; that, from people to people, audacious robbery, barbarous wars, and implacable animoſities were prevalent (*x*); that natural right was unknown; that morality was perverted by ſenſeleſs fanaticiſm and deplorable ſuperſtition; that a dream, a viſion, an oracle, were the frequent occaſion of the moſt terrible commotions. Nations are not perhaps yet free from the power of theſe evils; but their force is at leaſt diminiſhed, and the experience of paſt times has not been wholly loſt. Within the three laſt centuries eſpecially, the light of knowledge has been increaſed

increaſed and diſſeminated; civilization, aided by various happy circumſtances, has perceptibly advanced, and even inconveniences and abuſes have proved advantageous to it: for if conqueſts have extended kingdoms and ſtates beyond due bounds, the people of different countries, uniting under the ſame yoke, have loſt that ſpirit of eſtrangement and diviſion which made them all enemies to one another. If the hands of power have been ſtrengthened, an additional degree of ſyſtem and harmony has at leaſt been introduced in its exerciſe. If wars have become more general in the maſs of their influence and operation, they have been leſs deſtructive in their details. If the people carry to the combat leſs perſonality and leſs exertion, their ſtruggles are leſs ſanguinary and ferocious. If they are leſs free, they are leſs turbulent; if they are more effeminate, they are more pacific. Deſpotiſm itſelf ſeems not to have been unproductive of advantages: for if the government has been abſolute, it has been leſs perturbed and tempeſtuous; if thrones have been regarded as hereditary property, they have excited

cited leſs diſſention, and expoſed the people to fewer convulſions; in fine, if deſpots, with timid and myſterious jealouſy have interdicted all knowledge of their adminiſtration, all rivalſhip for the direction of affairs, the paſſions of mankind, excluded from the political career, have fixed upon the arts and the ſcience of nature; the ſphere of ideas has been enlarged on every ſide; man, devoted to abſtract ſtudies, has better underſtood his place in the ſyſtem of nature, and his ſocial relations; principles have been more fully diſcuſſed, objects more accurately diſcerned, knowledge more widely diffuſed, individuals made more capable, manners more ſociable, life more benevolent and pleaſing; the ſpecies at large, particularly in certain countries, have been evidently gainers: nor can this improvement fail to proceed, ſince its two principal obſtacles, thoſe which have hitherto rendered it ſo ſlow, and frequently retrograde, the difficulty of tranſmitting ideas from age to age, and communicating them rapidly from man to man, have been removed.

With

With the people of antiquity, every canton and every city, having a language peculiar to itſelf, ſtood aloof from the reſt, and the reſult was favourable to ignorance and anarchy: they had no communication of ideas, no participation of diſcoveries, no harmony of intereſts or of will, no unity of action or conduct. Beſide, the only means of diffuſing and tranſmitting ideas being that of ſpeech, fugitive and limited, and that of writing, ſlow of execution, expenſive, and acquired by few, there reſulted an extreme difficulty as to inſtruction in the firſt inſtance, the loſs of advantages one generation might derive from the experience of another, inſtability, retrogradation of ſcience, and one unvaried ſcene of chaos and childhood.

On the contrary, in the modern world, and particularly in Europe, great nations having allied themſelves by a ſort of univerſal language, the firm of opinion has been placed upon a broader baſis; the minds of men have ſympathiſed, their hearts have enlarged; we have ſeen agreement in thinking, and concord in

in acting: in fine, that ſacred art, that memorable gift of celeſtial genius, the preſs, furniſhed a means of communicating, of diffuſing at one inſtant any idea to millions of the ſpecies, and of giving it a permanence which all the power of tyrants has been able neither to ſuſpend nor to ſuppreſs. Hence has the vaſt maſs of inſtruction perpetually increaſed; hence has the atmoſphere of truth continually grown brighter, and a ſtrength of mind been produced that is in no fear of counteraction. And this improvement is the neceſſary effect of the laws of nature; for by the law of ſenſation, man as invincibly tends to make himſelf happy, as the flame to aſcend, the ſtone to gravitate, the water to gain its level. His ignorance is the obſtacle which miſleads him as to the means, and deceives him reſpecting cauſes and effects. By force of experience he will become enlightened; by force of errors he will ſet himſelf right; he will become wiſe and good, becauſe it is his intereſt to be ſo: and ideas communicating themſelves through a nation, whole claſſes will be inſtructed, ſcience will be univerſally

univerſally familiar, and all men will underſtand what are the principles of individual happineſs and of public felicity; they will underſtand what are their reſpective relations, their rights, and their duties, in the ſocial order; they will no longer be the dupes of inordinate deſire; they will perceive that morality is a branch of the ſcience of phyſics, compoſed it is true of elements complicated in their operation, but ſimple and invariable in their nature, as being no other than the elements of human organization itſelf. They will feel the neceſſity of being moderate and juſt, becauſe therein conſiſts the advantage and ſecurity of each; that to wiſh to enjoy at the expence of another is a falſe calculation of ignorance, becauſe the reſult of ſuch proceeding, are repriſals, enmity, and revenge; and that diſhoneſty is invariably the offspring of folly.

Individuals will feel that private happineſs is allied to the happineſs of ſociety:

The weak, that inſtead of dividing their intereſts, they ought to unite, becauſe equality conſtitutes their ſtrength:

The rich, that the meaſure of enjoyment is limited by the conſtitution of the organs, and that laſſitude follows ſatiety:

The poor, that the higheſt degree of human felicity conſiſts in peace of mind and the due employment of time:

Public opinion, reaching kings on their thrones, will oblige them to keep themſelves within the bounds of a regular authority:

Chance itſelf, ſerving the cauſe of nations, will give them ſometimes incapable chiefs, who, through weakneſs, will ſuffer them to become free; and ſometimes enlightened chiefs, who will virtuouſly emancipate them:

Individuality will be a term of greater comprehenſion, and nations, free and enlightened will hereafter become one complex individual, as ſingle men are now: the conſequences will be proportioned to the ſtate of things. The communication of knowledge will extend from ſociety to ſociety till it comprehends the whole earth. By the law of imitation the example of one people will be followed by others, who will adopt its ſpirit and its laws. Deſpots themſelves, perceiving that they can no longer maintain

their power without juſtice and beneficence, will be induced, both from neceſſity and rivalſhip, to ſoften the rigour of their government; and civilization will be univerſal.

Among nations there will be eſtabliſhed an equilibrium of force, which, confining them within the limits of juſt reſpect for their reciprocal rights, will put an end to the barbarous practice of war, and induce them to ſubmit to civil arbitration the deciſion of their diſputes (*y*); and the whole ſpecies will become one grand ſociety, one individual family governed by the ſame ſpirit, by common laws, and enjoying all the felicity of which human nature is capable.

This great work will doubtleſs be long accompliſhing, becauſe it is neceſſary that one and the ſame motion ſhould be communicated to the various parts of an immenſe body; that the ſame leaven ſhould aſſimilate an enormous maſs of heterogeneous elements: but this motion will effectually operate. Already ſociety at large, having paſſed through the ſame ſtages as particular ſocieties have done, promiſes to lead to the ſame reſults.

At

At firſt, diſconnected in its parts, each individual ſtood alone; and this intellectual ſolitude conſtituted its age of anarchy and childhood. Divided afterwards into ſections of irregular ſize, as chance directed, which have been called ſtates and kingdoms, it has experienced the fatal effects which reſult from the inequality of wealth and conditions; and the ariſtocracy by which great empires have domineered over their dependencies, have formed its ſecond age. In proceſs of time, theſe paramount chiefs of the globe have diſputed with each other for ſuperiority, and then was ſeen the period of faction and civil broils. And now the parties, tired of their diſcords and feeling the want of laws, ſigh for the epocha of order and tranquillity. Let but a virtuous chief ariſe, a powerful and juſt people appear, and the earth will arrive at ſupreme power. It waits a legiſlative people; this is the object of its wiſhes and its prayers, and my heart hears it's voice .... Then turning to the quarter of the Weſt: Yes, continued he, a hollow noiſe already ſtrikes my ear; the cry of liberty, uttered upon the farther ſhores of the Atlantic, has

reached to the old continent. At this cry a ſecret murmur againſt oppreſſion is excited in a powerful nation; a ſalutary alarm takes place reſpecting its ſituation; it enquires what it is and what it ought to be; it examines into its rights, its reſources, and what has been the conduct of its chiefs .... One day, one reflection more .... and an immenſe agitation will ariſe, a new age will make its appearance, an age of aſtoniſhment to vulgar minds, of ſurpriſe and dread to tyrants, of emancipation to a great people, and of hope to the whole world.

CHAP. XIV.

GRAND OBSTACLE TO IMPROVEMENT.

THE Genius ſtopt. My mind however, preoccupied with gloomy forebodings, yielded not to perſuaſion; but fearful of offending him by oppoſition, I made no reply. After a ſhort interval; fixing on me a look that tranſpierced my ſoul: You are ſilent, ſaid he, and your heart is agitated with thoughts which it dares not utter!—Confuſed and terrified: O Genius, I made anſwer, pardon my weakneſs: truth alone has doubtleſs proceeded from your lips; but your celeſtial intelligence can diſtinguiſh its traits, where to my groſs faculties there appear nothing but clouds. I acknowledge it, conviction has not penetrated my ſoul, and I feared that my doubts might give you offence.

And what is doubt, replied he, that it ſhould be regarded as a crime? Has man the power of thinking contrary to the impreſſions that are made upon him? If a truth

be palpable, and its obſervance important, let us pity the man who does not perceive it: his puniſhment will infallibly ſpring from his blindneſs. If it be uncertain and equivocal, how is he to find in it what does not exiſt? To believe without evidence and demonſtration is an act of ignorance and folly. The credulous man involves himſelf in a labyrinth of contradictions; the man of ſenſe examines and diſcuſſes every queſtion, that he may be conſiſtent in his opinions; he can endure contradiction, becauſe from the colliſion evidence ariſes. Violence is the argument of falſehood; and to impoſe a creed authoritatively, is the index and proceeding of a tyrant.

Emboldened by theſe ſentiments, I replied: O Genius, ſince my reaſon is free, I ſtrive in vain to welcome the flattering hope with which you would conſole me. The ſenſible and virtuous ſoul is prone enough to be hurried away by dreams of fancied happineſs; but a cruel reality inceſſantly recals its attention to ſuffering and wretchedneſs. The more I meditate on the nature of man, the more I examine the preſent ſtate of ſociety, the

the leſs poſſible does it appear to me that a world of wiſdom and felicity ſhould ever be realized. I ſurvey the face of our whole hemiſphere, and no where can I perceive the germ of a happy revolution. All Aſia is buried in the moſt profound darkneſs. The Chineſe, ſubjected to an inſolent deſpotiſm, (z) dependent for their fortune upon the deciſion of lots, and held in awe by ſtrokes of the bamboo, enſlaved by the immutability of their code, and by the irremediable vice of their language, offer to my view an abortive civilization and a race of automata. The Indian, fettered by prejudice, and manacled by the inviolable inſtitution of his caſts, vegetates in an incurable apathy. The Tartar, wandering or fixed, at all times ignorant and ferocious, lives in the barbarity of his anceſtors. The Arab, endowed with a happy genius, loſes its force and the fruit of his labour in the anarchy of his tribes, and the jealouſy of his families. The African, degraded from the ſtate of man, ſeems irremediably devoted to ſervitude. In the North I ſee nothing but ſerfs, reduced to the level of cattle, the live ſtock of the eſtate upon

which they live (1). Ignorance, tyranny, and wretchedneſs have every where ſtruck the nations with ſtupor; and vicious habits, depraving the natural ſenſes, have deſtroyed the very inſtinct of happineſs and truth. In ſome countries of Europe, indeed, reaſon begins to expand its wings; but even there is the knowledge of individual minds common to the nation? Has the ſuperiority of the government been turned to the advantage of the people? And theſe people, who call themſelves poliſhed, are they not thoſe who three centuries ago filled the earth with their injuſtice? Are they not thoſe who, under the pretext of commerce, laid India waſte, diſpeopled a new continent, and who at preſent ſubject Africa to the moſt inhuman ſlavery? Can liberty ſpring up out of the boſom of deſpots, and juſtice be adminiſtered by the hands of rapacity and avarice? O Genius! I have beheld civilized countries, and the illuſion of their wiſdom has vaniſhed from my ſight. I ſaw riches accumulated in the hands of a few individuals, and the multitude poor and deſtitute. I ſaw all right and power concentered in certain claſſes, and the maſs

of

of the people paſſive and dependent. I ſaw the palaces of princes, but no incorporation of individuals as ſuch, no common-hall of nations. I perceived the deep attention that was given to the intereſts of government; but no public intereſt, no ſympathetic ſpirit. I ſaw that the whole ſcience of thoſe who command conſiſted in prudently oppreſſing; and the refined ſervitude of poliſhed nations only appeared to me the more irremediable.

With one obſtacle in particular my mind was ſenſibly ſtruck. In ſurveying the globe, I perceived that it was divided into twenty different ſyſtems of religious worſhip. Each nation has received, or formed for itſelf, oppoſite opinions, and aſcribing to itſelf excluſively the truth, has imagined every other to be in error. But if, as is the fact, in this diſcordance the majority deceive themſelves, and deceive themſelves with ſincerity, it follows that the human mind as readily imbibes falſehood as truth; and in that caſe how is it to be enlightened? How are prejudices to be extirpated that firſt take root in the mind? How is the bandage to be removed from the eyes, when the firſt article

in

in every creed, the firſt dogma of all religions, is the proſcription of doubt, of examination, and of the right of private judgment? How is truth to make itſelf known? If ſhe reſort to the demonſtration of argument, puſillanimous man appeals againſt evidence to his conſcience. If ſhe call in the aid of divine authority, already prepoſſeſſed, he oppoſes an authority of a ſimilar kind, and treats all innovation as blaſphemy. Thus, in his blindneſs, riveting the chains upon himſelf, does he become the ſport of his ignorance and paſſions. To diſſolve theſe fatal ſhackles, a miraculous concurrence of happy circumſtances would be neceſſary. It would be neceſſary that a whole nation, cured of the delirium of ſuperſtition, ſhould no longer be liable to the impreſſions of fanaticiſm; that, freed from the yoke of a falſe doctrine, it ſhould voluntarily embrace the genuine ſyſtem of morality and reaſon; that it ſhould become at once courageous and prudent, wiſe and docile; that every individual, acquainted with his rights, ſhould ſcrupulouſly obſerve their limits; that the poor ſhould know how to reſiſt ſeduction, and the rich the allurements

of

of avarice; that there ſhould be found upright and diſintereſted chiefs; that its tyrants ſhould be ſeized with a ſpirit of madneſs and folly; that the people, recovering their powers, ſhould perceive their inability to exerciſe them, and conſent to appoint delegates; that having firſt created their magiſtrates, they ſhould know both how to reſpect and how to judge them; that in the rapid renovation of a whole nation pervaded with abuſe, each individual, removed from his former habits, ſhould ſuffer patiently the pains and ſelf-denials annexed; in fine, that the nation ſhould have the courage to conquer its liberty, the wiſdom to ſecure it, the power to defend it, and the generoſity to communicate it. Can ſober judgment expect this combination of circumſtances? Should fortune in the infinite variety of her caprices produce them, is it likely that I ſhould live to ſee that day? Will not this frame long before that have mouldered in the tomb?

Here, oppreſſed with ſorrow, my heart deprived me of utterance. The Genius made no reply; but in a low tone of voice I heard him ſay to himſelf: "Let us revive the hope

"of

" of this man; for if he who loves his fellow-
" creatures be ſuffered to deſpair, what is to
" become of nations? The paſt is perhaps
" but too much calculated to deject him.
" Let us then anticipate futurity; let us un-
" veil the aſtoniſhing age that is about to
" ariſe, that virtue, ſeeing the end of its
" wiſhes, animated with new vigour, may
" redouble its efforts to haſten the accom-
" pliſhment of it."

CHAP.

CHAP. XV.

NEW AGE.

SCARCELY had the Genius uttered to himſelf theſe words than an immenſe noiſe proceeded from the Weſt, and turning my eyes to that quarter, I perceived, at the extremity of the Mediterranean, in the country of one of the European nations, a prodigious movement, ſimilar to what exiſts in the boſom of a large city when, pervaded with ſedition, an innumerable people, like waves, fluctuate in the ſtreets and public places. My ear, ſtruck with their cries, which aſcended to the very heavens, diſtinguiſhed at intervals theſe phraſes:

" What is this new prodigy? What this " cruel and myſterious ſcourge? We are a " numerous people, and we want ſtrength! " We have an excellent ſoil, and we are " deſtitute of proviſion! We are active and " laborious, and we live in indigence! We " pay enormous tributes, and we are told " that

" that they are not ſufficient! We are at " peace without, and our perſons and pro- " perty are not ſafe within! What then is " the ſecret enemy that devours us?"

From the midſt of the concourſe, ſome individual voices replied: " Erect a ſtandard " of diſtinction, and let all thoſe who, by " uſeful labours, contribute to the ſupport " and maintenance of ſociety, gather round " it, and you will diſcover the enemy that " preys on your vitals."

The ſtandard being erected, the nation found itſelf ſuddenly divided into two bodies of unequal magnitude and diſſimilar appearance: the one innumerable and nearly integral, exhibited, in the general poverty of their dreſs, and in their meagre and ſunburnt faces, the marks of toil and wretchedneſs; the other, a petty groupe, a valueleſs faction, preſented, in their rich attire, embroidered with gold and ſilver, and in their ſleek and ruddy complexions, the ſymptoms of leiſure and abundance. Conſidering theſe men more attentively, I perceived that the large body was conſtituted of labourers, artiſans, tradeſmen, and every profeſſion uſeful

to ſociety; and that in the leſſer groupe there were none but prieſts, courtiers, public accountants, commanders of troops, in ſhort, the civil, military, or religious agents of government.

The two bodies being front to front aſſembled, and having looked with aſtoniſhment at each other, I ſaw the feelings of indignation and reſentment ſpring up in the one, and a ſort of panic in the other; and the large ſaid to the ſmall body:

Why ſtand you apart? Are you not of our number?

No, replied the groupe; you are the people; we are a privileged claſs; we have laws, cuſtoms, and rights peculiar to ourſelves.

People.

And what labour do you perform in the ſociety?

Privileged Claſs.

None: we are not made to labour.

People.

How then have you acquired your wealth?

Privileged Claſs.

By taking the pains to govern you.

People.

People.

To govern us! and is this what you call governing? We toil, and you enjoy; we produce, and you diſſipate; wealth flows from us, and you abſorb it.... Privileged men, claſs diſtinct from the people, form a nation apart, and govern yourſelves (2).

Then, deliberating on their new ſituation, ſome among the groupe ſaid: Let us join the people, and partake their burthens and cares; for they are men like ourſelves. Others replied: To mix with the herd would be degrading and vile; they are born to ſerve us, who are men of a ſuperior race. The civil governors ſaid: the people are mild and naturally ſervile; let us ſpeak to them in the name of the king and the law, and they will return to their duty.... People! the king decrees, the ſovereign ordains.

People.

The king cannot decree any thing which the ſafety of the people does not demand; the ſovereign cannot ordain but according to law.

Civil Governors.

The law calls upon you for ſubmiſſion.

People.

The law is the general will; and we will a new order.

Civil Governors.

You are in that caſe rebels.

People.

A nation cannot be a rebel; tyrants only are rebels.

Civil Governors.

The king is on our ſide, and he enjoins you to ſubmit.

People.

Kings cannot be ſeparated from the nation in which they reign. Our king cannot be on your ſide; you have only the phantom of his countenance.

Then the military governors advanced, and they ſaid: The people are timorous; it is proper to threaten them; they will yield to the influence of force.... Soldiers, chaſtiſe this inſolent multitude!

People.

Soldiers, our blood flows in your veins! will you ſtrike your brothers? If the people be deſtroyed, who will maintain the army?

And the ſoldiers, grounding their arms,

" ſaid to their chiefs: We are a part of the people; we whom you call upon to fight againſt them.

Then the eccleſiaſtical governors ſaid: There is but one reſource left. The people are ſuperſtitious; it is proper to overawe them with the names of God and religion.

Prieſts.

Our dear brethren, our children, God has commiſſioned us to govern you.

People.

Produce the patent of his commiſſion.

Prieſts.

You muſt have faith; reaſon leads men into guilt.

People.

And would you govern us without reaſon?

Prieſts.

God is the God of peace; religion enjoins you to obey.

People.

No; juſtice goes before peace; obedience implies a law, and renders neceſſary the cognizance of it.

Prieſts.

This world was intended for trial and ſuffering.

People.

People.

Do you then ſhow us the example of ſuffering.

Prieſts.

Would you live without Gods or kings?

People.

We abjure tyranny of every kind.

Prieſts.

You muſt have mediators, perſons who may act in your behalf.

People.

Mediators with God, and mediators with the king! Courtiers and prieſts, your ſervices are too expenſive; henceforth we take our affairs into our own hands.

Then the ſmaller groupe exclaimed: It is over with us; the multitude are enlightened. And the people replied: You ſhall not be hurt; we are enlightened, and we will commit no violence. We deſire nothing but our rights: reſentment we cannot but feel, but we conſent to paſs it by: we were ſlaves, we might now command; but we aſk only to be free, and free we are.

CHAP. XVI.

A FREE AND LEGISLATIVE PEOPLE.

I NOW reflected with myſelf that public power was at a ſtand, that the habitual government of this people was annihilated, and I ſhuddered at the idea of their falling into the diſſolution of anarchy. But taking their affairs immediately into their conſideration, they quickly diſpelled my apprehenſions.

"It is not enough, ſaid they, that we "have freed ourſelves from paraſites and "tyrants, we muſt prevent for ever the re- "vival of their power. We are human "beings, and we know, by dear-bought ex- "perience, that every human being inceſ- "ſantly graſps at authority, and wiſhes to "enjoy at the expence of others. It is "therefore neceſſary to guard ourſelves be- "forehand againſt this unfortunate propen- "ſity, the prolific parent of diſcord; it is "neceſſary to eſtabliſh rules by which our "rights

"rights are to be determined and our con-
"duct governed. But in this inveſtigation
"abſtruſe and difficult queſtions are in-
"volved, which demand all the attention
"and faculties of the wiſeſt men. Occupied
"in our reſpective callings, we have neither
"leiſure for theſe ſtudies, nor are we com-
"petent of ourſelves to the exerciſe of ſuch
"functions. Let us ſelect from our body
"certain individuals, to whom the employ-
"ment will be proper. To them let our
"common powers be delegated, to frame for
"us a ſyſtem of government and laws: let us
"conſtitute them the repreſentatives of our
"intereſts and our wills; and that this re-
"preſentation may be as accurate as poſſible,
"and have comprehended in it the whole
"diverſity of our wills and intereſts, let the
"individuals that comprize it be numerous,
"and citizens like ourſelves."

The ſelection being made, the people thus addreſſed their delegates: "We have hither-
"to lived in a ſociety formed by chance,
"without fixed clauſes, without free con-
"ventions, without ſtipulation of rights,
"without reciprocal engagements; and a

" multitude of diſorders and evils have been
" the reſult of this confuſed ſtate of things.
" We would now, with mature deliberation,
" frame a regular compact; and we have
" made choice of you to draw up the articles
" of it. Examine then with care what
" ought to be its baſis and principles. In-
" veſtigate the object and tendency of every
" aſſociation; obſerve what are the rights
" which every individual brings into it, the
" powers he cedes for the public good, and
" the powers which he reſerves entire to
" himſelf. Communicate to us equitable
" laws and rules of conduct. Prepare for
" us a new ſyſtem of government, for we
" feel that the principles, which to this day
" have guided us, are corrupt. Our fathers
" have wandered in the paths of ignorance,
" and we from habit have trod in their ſteps.
" Every thing is conducted by violence,
" fraud, or deluſion; and the laws of mo-
" rality and reaſon are ſtill buried in obſcu-
" rity. Do you unfold the chaos; diſcover
" the time, order, and connexion of things;
" publiſh your code of laws and rights; and
" we will conform to it."

And this people raiſed an immenſe throne in the form of a pyramid, and ſeating upon it the men they had choſen, ſaid to them: "We raiſe you this day above us, that you "may take a more comprehenſive view of "our relations, and be exalted above the at-"moſphere of our paſſions.

"But remember that you are citizens like "ourſelves; that the power which we con-"fer upon you belongs to us; that we give "it as a truſt for which you are reſponſible, "not as excluſive property, or hereditary "right; that the laws which you make, you "will be the firſt to ſubmit to; that to-"morrow you will deſcend from your ſta-"tions, and rank again with us; that you "will have acquired no diſtinguiſhing right, "but the right to our gratitude and eſteem. "And oh! with what glory will the uni-"verſe, that reveres ſo many apoſtles of "error, honour the firſt aſſembly of en-"lightened and reaſonable men, who ſhall "have declared the immutable principles of "juſtice to mankind, and conſecrated in the "very face of tyrants the rights of nations!"

CHAP. XVII.

UNIVERSAL BASIS OF ALL RIGHT AND ALL LAW.

THESE men, choſen by the people to inveſtigate the true principles of morality and reaſon, then proceeded to the object of their miſſion: and after a long examination, having diſcovered a univerſal and fundamental principle, they ſaid to their conſtituents: "We "have employed our faculties in the inveſti- "gation you demand of us, and we conceive "the following to be the primordial baſis and "phyſical origin of all juſtice and all right.

"Whatever be the active power, the mov- "ing cauſe that directs the univerſe, this "power having given to all men the ſame "organs, the ſame ſenſations, and the ſame "wants, has thereby ſufficiently declared that "it has alſo given them the ſame rights to "the uſe of its benefits; and that in the "order of nature all men are equal.

"Secondly,

" Secondly, inaſmuch as this power has " given to every man the ability of preſerving " and maintaining his own exiſtence, it clear- " ly follows that all men are conſtituted in- " dependent of each other, that they are " created free, that no man can be ſubject " and no man ſovereign, but that all men " are the unlimited proprietors of their own " perſons.

" Equality, therefore, and liberty, are two " eſſential attributes of man, two laws of the " Divinity, not leſs eſſential and immutable, " than the phyſical properties of inanimate " nature.

" Again, from the principle, that every " man is the unlimited maſter of his own " perſon, it follows, that one inſeparable con- " dition in every contract and engagement is " the free and voluntary conſent of all the " perſons therein bound.

" Farther, becauſe every individual is " equal to every other individual, it follows, " that the balance of receipts and payments " in political ſociety, ought to be rigorouſly " in equilibrium with each other; ſo that

" from the idea of equality immediately flows
" that other idea of equity and juſtice *.

" Finally, equality and liberty conſtitute
" the phyſical and unalterable baſis of every
" union of men in ſociety, and of conſe-
" quence the neceſſary and generating prin-
" ciple of every law and regular ſyſtem of
" government (3).

" It is becauſe this baſis has been invaded,
" that the diſorders have been introduced
" among you, as in every other nation, which
" have at length excited you to reſiſtance.
" It is by returning once more to a conformity
" with this rule, that you can reform abuſes
" and reconſtitute a happy order of ſociety.

" We are bound however to obſerve to
" you, that from this regeneration there will
" reſult an extreme ſhock to be endured in
" your habits, in your fortunes, and in your
" prejudices. Vicious contracts muſt be
" diſſolved, unjuſt prejudices aboliſhed,
" imaginary diſtinctions ſurrendered, and

* The etymology of the words themſelves trace out to us this connexion: *equilibrium*, *equalitas*, *equitas*, are all of one family, and the phyſical idea of *equality* in the ſcales of a balance is the ſource and type of all the reſt.

" iniquitous

" iniquitous deſcriptions of property abro-
" gated: in fine you muſt ſet out once more
" from the ſtate of nature. Conſider whether
" you are capable of theſe mighty ſacrifices."

They concluded: and while I reflected upon the inherent cupidity of the human heart, I was induced to believe that the people would reject a melioration preſented under ſuch auſtere colours. I was miſtaken. Inſtantly a vaſt crowd of men thronged towards the throne, and ſolemnly abjured all riches and all diſtinctions. " Unfold to us, " cried they, the laws of equality and liberty: " we diſclaim all future poſſeſſion that is not " held in the ſacred name of juſtice. *Equality*, " *liberty*, *juſtice*, theſe are our inviolable code, " theſe names ſhall inſcribe our ſtandard."

Immediately the people raiſed a mighty ſtandard, varied with three colours, and upon which thoſe three words were written. They unfurled it over the throne of the legiſlators, and now for the firſt time the ſymbol of univerſal and equal juſtice appeared upon the earth. In front of the throne the people built an altar, on which they placed golden ſcales, a ſword, and a book, with this legend:

TO EQUAL LAW, THE PROTECTOR, AND THE JUDGE. They then drew round the throne a vaſt amphitheatre, and the nation ſeated itſelf to hear the publication of the law. Millions of men, in act of ſolemn appeal to heaven, lifted up their hands together, and ſwore "that they would live "equal, free and juſt; that they would re-"ſpect the rights and property of each "other; that they would yield obedience to "the law and its miniſters regularly ap-"pointed."

A ſight like this, ſo full of ſublimity and energy, ſo intereſting by the generous emotions it implied, melted me into tears; and addreſſing myſelf to the Genius, I ſaid: "Now may I live, for after this there is "nothing which I am not daring enough to "hope."

CHAP.

CHAP. XVIII.

CONSTERNATION AND CONSPIRACY OF TYRANTS.

MEANWHILE, ſcarcely had the ſolemn cry of liberty and equality reſounded through the earth, than aſtoniſhment and apprehenſion were excited in the different nations. In one place, the multitude, moved by deſire, but wavering between hope and fear, between a ſenſe of their rights and the habitual yoke of ſlavery, betrayed ſymptoms of agitation: in another kings, ſuddenly rouſed from the ſleep of indolence and deſpotiſm, were alarmed for the ſafety of their thrones: every where thoſe claſſes of civil and religious tyrants, who deceive princes and oppreſs the people, were ſeized with rage and conſternation; and concerting plans of perfidy, they ſaid to one another: "Woe be to us, ſhould "this fatal cry of liberty reach the ear of the "multitude, and this deſtructive ſpirit of "juſtice

" juſtice be diſſeminated."....And ſeeing the ſtandard waving in the air: " What a ſwarm " of evils, cried they, are included in theſe " three words! If all men are equal, where " is our excluſive right to honours and " power? If all men are, or ought to be " free, what becomes of our ſlaves, our vaſſals, " our property? If all are equal in a civil " capacity, where are our privileges of birth " and ſucceſſion, and what becomes of no- " bility? If all are equal before God, where " will be the need of mediators, and what is " to become of the prieſthood? Ah! let us " accompliſh without a moment's delay the " deſtruction of a germ ſo prolific and con- " tagious! let us employ the whole force " of our art againſt this calamity. Let us " ſound the alarm to kings, that they may " join in our cauſe. Let us divide the peo- " ple; let us engage them in war, and turn " aſide their attention by conqueſts and na- " tional jealouſy. Let us excite their ap- " prehenſions reſpecting the power of this " free nation. Let us form a grand league " againſt the common enemy. Let us pull

" down

" down this ſacrilegious ſtandard, demoliſh " this throne of rebellion, and quench this " fire of revolution in its outſet."

And in reality, the civil and religious tyrants of the people entered into a general combination, and having gained, either by conſtraint or ſeduction, multitudes on their ſide, they advanced in an hoſtile manner againſt the free nation. Surrounding the altar and the throne of natural law, they demanded, with loud cries: " What is this new and heretical " doctrine? What this impious altar, this " ſacrilegious worſhip? .... True believers " and loyal ſubjects! Would you not ſuppoſe " that to day truth has been firſt diſcovered, " and that hitherto you have been involved in " error? Would you not ſuppoſe that theſe " men, more fortunate than yourſelves, have " alone the privilege of being wiſe? And you, " rebel and guilty nation, do you not feel that " your chiefs miſlead you? That they adul- " terate the principles of your faith, and " overturn the religion of your fathers? " Tremble leſt the wrath of heaven be " lighted againſt you; and haſten by ſpeedy " repentance to expiate your error."

But inacceſſible to ſeduction as to terror, the

the free nation kept ſilence: it maintained an exact diſcipline in arms, and continued to exhibit an impoſing attitude.

And the legiſlators ſaid to the chiefs of nations: "If when we went on with our "eyes hood-winked, our ſteps did not fail to "be enlightened, why, now that the ban-"dage is removed, ſhould we conceive that "we are involved in darkneſs? If we, who "preſcribe to mankind to exert their facul-"ties, deceive and miſlead them, what can "be expected from thoſe who deſire only to "maintain them in blindneſs? Ye chiefs of "nations, if you poſſeſs truth communicate "it: we ſhall receive it with gratitude; for "with ardour we purſue it, and with intereſt "ſhall engage in the diſcovery. We are "men, and may be deceived; but you alſo are "men and as fallible as ourſelves. Aſſiſt us "in this labyrinth, in which the human ſpecies "has wandered for ſo many ages: aſſiſt us "to diſſipate the illuſion of evil habits and "prejudice. Enter the liſts with us in "the ſhock of opinions which diſpute for "our acceptance, and engage with us in "tracing the pure and proper character of "truth. Let us terminate to day the long

"combat

" combat of error: let us eſtabliſh between " it and truth a ſolemn conteſt: let us call " in men of every nation to aſſiſt us in the " judgment: let us convoke a general aſſem- " bly of the world; let them be judges in " their own cauſe; and in the ſucceſſive trial " of every ſyſtem, let no champion and no " argument be wanting to the ſide of preju- " dice or of reaſon. In fine, let a fair exami- " nation of the reſult of the whole, give birth " to univerſal harmony of minds and opi- " nions."

CHAP. XIX.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PEOPLE.

THUS ſpoke the legiſlators of this free people; and the multitude, ſeized with the ſpirit of admiration, which every reaſonable propoſition never fails to inſpire, ſhouted their applauſe, and the tyrants remained alone, overwhelmed with confuſion.

A ſcene of a new and aſtoniſhing nature then preſented itſelf to my view. All the people and nations of the globe, every race of men from every different climate, advancing on all ſides, ſeemed to aſſemble in one incloſure, and form in diſtinct groupes an immenſe congreſs. The motley appearance of this innumerable crowd, occaſioned by their diverſity of dreſs, of features and of complexion, exhibited a moſt extraordinary and moſt attractive ſpectacle.

On one ſide I could diſtinguiſh the European with his ſhort and cloſe habit, his triangular hat, ſmooth chin, and powdered hair;

hair; and on the oppoſite ſide the Aſiatic with a flowing robe, a long beard, a ſhaved head and circular turban. Here I obſerved the inhabitants of Africa, their ſkin of the colour of ebony, their hair woolly, their body girt with white and blue fiſh-ſkin, and adorned with bracelets and collars of corals, ſhells and glaſs-beads; there the northern tribes inveloped in bags of ſkin; the Laplander with his piked bonnet and his ſnow ſhoes; the Samoiede with glowing limbs and with a ſtrong odour; the Tongouſe with his bonnet ſhaped like a horn, and carrying his idols pendent from his neck; the Yakoute with his freckled ſkin; the Calmuc with flattened noſe and with little eyes, forced as it were to have no correſpondence with each other. Farther in the diſtance were the Chineſe, attired in ſilk, and with their hair hanging in treſſes; the Japaneſe of mingled race; the Malayans with ſpreading ears, with a ring in their noſe, and with a vaſt hat of the leaves of the palm-tree (4); and the *Tatoued* inhabitants of the iſlands of the ocean and of the continent of the Antipodes *. The

* The country of the *Papous*, or New Guinea.

contemplation of one ſpecies thus infinitely varied, of one underſtanding thus modified with extravagance, of one organization aſſuming ſo contrary appearances, gave me a very complicated ſenſation, and excited in me a thouſand thoughts (5). I contemplated with aſtoniſhment this gradation of colour, from a bright carnation to a brown ſcarcely leſs bright, a dark brown, a muddy brown, bronze, olive, leaden, copper, as far as to the black of ebony and jet. I obſerved the Caſſimerean, with his roſe-coloured cheek, next in vicinity to the ſun-burnt Hindoo; the Georgian ſtanding by the Tartar; and I reflected upon the effect of climate hot or cold, of ſoil mountainous or deep, marſhy or dry, wooded or open. I compared the dwarf of the pole with the giant of the temperate zone; the lank Arab with the pot-bellied Hollander; the ſquat figure of the Samoiede with the tall and ſlender form of the Sclavonian and the Greek; the greaſy and woolly head of the Negro with the ſhining locks of the Dane; the flat-faced Calmuc, with his eyes angle-wiſe to each other and his noſe cruſhed, to the oval and ſwelling

ſwelling viſage, the large blue eyes, and the aquiline noſe, of the Circaſſian and the Abaſſin. I contraſted the painted linens of India with the workmanlike cloths of Europe; the rich furs of Sileſia; the various clothing of ſavage nations, ſkins of fiſhes, platting of reeds, interweaving of leaves and of feathers, together with the blue-ſtained figures of ſerpents, ſtars and flowers, with which their ſkin is varied. Sometimes the general appearance of this multitude, reminded me of the enamelled meadows of the Nile and the Euphrates, when, after rains and inundations, millions of flowers unfold themſelves on all ſides; and ſometimes it reſembled, in murmuring ſound and buſy motion, the innumerable ſwarms of graſshoppers which alight in the ſpring like a cloud upon the plains of Hauran.

At ſight of ſo many living and percipient animals, I recollected, on one ſide, the immenſe multitude of thoughts and ſenſations which were crowded into this ſpace; and on the other, reflected on the conteſt of ſo many opinions and prejudices, and the ſtruggle of ſo many capricious paſſions; and I was ſtruck

with aſtoniſhment, admiration, and apprehenſion.... When the legiſlators, having enjoined ſilence, preſently fixed my attention on themſelves.

" Inhabitants of the earth, ſaid they, a " free and powerful nation addreſſes you in " the name of juſtice and of peace, and offers " as the ſure pledge of its ſincerity, its convic- " tion and experience. We were for a long " time tormented with the ſame evils as you; " we have enquired into their origin, and we " have found them to be derived from vio- " lence and injuſtice, which the inexperience " of paſt ages eſtabliſhed into laws, and the " prejudices of the preſent generation have " ſupported and cheriſhed. Then, aboliſhing " every factitious and arbitrary inſtitution, " and aſcending to the ſource of reaſon and " of right, we perceived that there exiſted in " the order of the univerſe, and in the phyſi- " cal conſtitution of man, eternal and immu- " table laws, which waited only his obſervance " to render him happy. O men of different " climes, look to the heavens that give you " light, to the earth that nouriſhes you! " Since they preſent to you all the ſame gifts;

" ſince

" ſince the Power that directs their motions " has beſtowed on you the ſame life, the " ſame organs, the ſame wants, has it not " alſo given you the ſame right to the uſe " of its benefits! Has is not hereby declared " you to be all equal and free? What mor- " tal then ſhall dare refuſe to his fellow-crea- " ture that which is granted him by nature? " O nations! let us baniſh all tyranny and " diſcord; let us form one ſociety, one vaſt " family; and ſince mankind are all conſti- " tuted alike, let there henceforth exiſt but " one law, that of nature; one code, that of " reaſon: one throne, that of juſtice; one " altar, that of union."

They ceaſed: and the multitude rended the ſkies with applauſe and acclamation; and in their tranſports made the earth reſound with the words *equality*, *juſtice*, *union*. But different feelings preſently ſucceeded to this firſt emotion. The doctors and chiefs of the people exciting in them a ſpirit of diſputation, there aroſe a kind of murmur, which, ſpreading from groupe to groupe, was converted into uproar, and from uproar into diſorder of the firſt magnitude. Every na-

tion assumed exclusive pretensions, and claimed the preference for its own opinions and code.

"You are in error," said the parties pointing at each other; "we alone are in possession "of reason and truth: ours is the true law, "the genuine rule of justice and right, the "sole means of happiness and perfection; all "other men are either blind or rebellious." And the agitation became extreme.

But the legislators having proclaimed silence: "People," said they, "by what impulse "of passion are you agitated? Where will "this quarrel conduct you? What advantage "do you expect from this dissention? For "ages has the earth been a field of disputa- "tion, and torrents of blood have been shed "to decide the controversy: what profi thave "you reaped from so many combats and "tears? When the strong has subjected the "weak to his opinion, has he thereby fur- "thered the cause of evidence and truth? O "nations, take council of your own wisdom! "If disputes arise between families, or in- "dividuals, by what mode do you reconcile "them! Do you not appoint arbitrators?

"Yes,"

" *Yes,*" exclaimed the multitude unanimouſly.
" Treat then the authors of your preſent
" diſſentions in a ſimilar manner. Command
" thoſe who call themſelves your inſtructors,
" and who impoſe on you their creed, to
" diſcuſs in your preſence the arguments on
" which it is founded. Since they appeal to
" your intereſts, underſtand in what manner
" your intereſts are treated by them.... And
" you, chiefs and doctors of the people, be-
" fore you involve them in the diſcordance
" of your opinions, let the reaſons for and
" againſt theſe opinions be fairly diſcuſſed.
" Let us eſtabliſh a ſolemn controverſy, a
" public inveſtigation of truth, not before
" the tribunal of a frail individual, or a pre-
" judiced party, but in preſence of the united
" information and intereſts of mankind; and
" let the natural ſenſe of the whole ſpecies be
" our arbitrator and judge."

CHAP.

CHAP. XX.

INVESTIGATION OF TRUTH.

THE people having by ſhouts expreſſed their approbation, the legiſlators ſaid: "That "we may proceed in this grand work with "order and regularity, let a ſpacious am- "phitheatre be formed in the ſand before "the altar of union and peace; let each "ſyſtem of religion and each particular ſect, "erect its proper and diſtinguiſhing ſtandard "in points of the circumference; let its "chiefs and its doctors place themſelves "round it, and let their followers be ranged "in a right line terminated by the ſtandard."

The amphitheatre being traced out, and order proclaimed, a prodigious number of ſtandards were inſtantly raiſed, ſimilar to what is ſeen in a commercial port, when, on days of feſtivity, the flags of a hundred nations ſtream from a foreſt of maſts. At ſight of this aſtoniſhing diverſity, I addreſſed myſelf to the Genius; I ſcarcely ſuppoſed the earth, ſaid

ſaid I, to be divided into more than eight or ten different ſyſtems of religion, and I then deſpaired of concillation: how can I now hope for concord when I behold thouſands of different parties!—Theſe however, replied the Genius, are but a part of what exiſt; and yet they would be intolerant!

As the groupes advanced to take their ſtations, the Genius, pointing out to me the ſymbols and attributes of each, thus explained to me their meaning.

That firſt groupe, ſaid he, with a green ſtandard, on which you ſee diſplayed a croſs, a bandage, and a ſabre, is formed of the followers of the Arabian prophet. To believe in a God (without knowing what he is); to have faith in the words of a man (without underſtanding the language in which he ſpeaks); to travel into a deſert in order to pray to the Deity (who is every where); to waſh the hands with water (and not abſtain from blood); to faſt all day (and practiſe intemperance at night); to give alms of their own property (and to plunder the property of their neighbour): ſuch are the means of perfection inſtituted by Mahomet, ſuch the

ſignals

ſignals and characteriſtics of his true followers; and whoever profeſſes not theſe tenets, is conſidered as a reprobate, has the ſacred anathema denounced againſt him, and is devoted to the ſword. A God of clemency, the author of life, has, according to them, inſtituted theſe laws of oppreſſion and murder; has inſtituted them for the whole univerſe, though he has condeſcended to reveal them but to one man; has eſtabliſhed them from all eternity, though they were made known by him but yeſterday. Theſe laws are ſufficient for all the purpoſes of life, and yet a volume is added to them; this volume was to diffuſe light, to exhibit evidence, to lead to perfection and happineſs, and yet, in the very life-time of its prophet, its pages, every where abounding with obſcure, ambiguous, and contradictory paſſages, needed explanation and commentaries; and the perſons who undertook to interpret them, varying in opinion, became divided into ſects and parties oppoſite and inimical to each other. One maintains that Ali is the true ſucceſſor, and another takes the part of Omar and Aboubekre. This denies the eternity of the

Koran,

Koran, that the neceſſity of ablutions and prayers. The Carmite proſcribes pilgrimage, and allows the uſe of wine; the Hakemite preaches the doctrine of tranſmigration, and thus are there ſects to the number of ſeventy-two, of which you may enumerate the diſferent ſtandards (6). In this diſcordance, each aſcribing the evidence excluſively to itſelf, and ſtigmatizing the reſt with hereſy and rebellion, has turned againſt them its ſanguinary zeal. And this religion, which celebrates a beneficent and merciful God, the common parent of the whole human race, converted into a torch of diſcord and an incentive to war, has never ceaſed for twelve hundred years to whelm the earth in blood, and ſpread ravage and deſolation from one extremity of the ancient hemiſphere to the other (7).

The men you ſee diſtinguiſhed by their vaſt white turbans, their hanging ſleeves and long roſaries, are the Imans, the Mollas, and the Muftis; and not far from them are the Derviſes with a pointed bonnet, and the Santons with their ſacred tonſure. They utter with vehemence their ſeveral confeſ-

ſions

ſions of faith; they diſpute with eagerneſs reſpecting the more or leſs important ſources of impurity; the mode of performing ablutions; the attributes and perfections of God; the Chaîtan and the good and evil Genii; death; the reſurrection; the interrogatory which ſucceeds the tomb; the paſſage of the perilous bridge, and its hair-breadth eſcapes; the balance of good and bad works; the pains of hell, and the joys of paradiſe.

By the ſide of theſe, that ſtill more numerous groupe, with ſtandards of a white ground ſtrewed with croſſes, conſiſts of the worſhippers of Jeſus. Acknowledging the ſame God as the Muſſulmans, founding their belief on the ſame books, admitting like them a firſt man, who loſt the whole human race by eating an apple, they yet feel towards them a holy horror; and from motives of *piety*, theſe two ſects reciprocally treat each other as *impious* men and blaſphemers. Their chief point of diſſention is, that the Chriſtian, after admitting the unity and indiviſibility of God, proceeds to divide him into three perſons, making of each an entire and complete God, and yet preſerving an identical

whole: he adds, that this Being, who fills the univerſe, reduced himſelf to the ſtature and form of a man, and aſſumed material, periſhable, and limited organs, without ceaſing to be immaterial, eternal, and infinite. The Muſſulman, on the contrary, not able to comprehend theſe myſteries, though he readily conceives of the eternity of the Koran, and the miſſion of the prophet, treats them as abſurdities, and rejects them as the viſions of a diſordered brain. Hence reſult the moſt implacable animoſities.

Divided among themſelves, the Chriſtian ſects are not leſs numerous than thoſe of the Muſſulman religion; and the quarrels that agitate them are by ſo much the more violent, ſince the objects for which they contend being inacceſſible to the ſenſes, and of conſequence incapable of demonſtration, the opinions of each ſectary can have no other foundation than that of his will or caprice. Thus agreeing that God is an incomprehenſible and unknown being, they nevertheleſs diſpute reſpecting his eſſence, his mode of acting, and his attributes. Agreeing that his ſuppoſed transformation into man, is an

enigma

enigma above the human underſtanding, they ſtill diſpute reſpecting the confuſion or the diſtinction of two wills and two natures, the change of ſubſtance, the real or fictitious preſence, the mode of incarnation, &c. &c. Hence innumerable ſects, of which two or three hundred have already periſhed, and three or four hundred others ſtill exiſt, and are repreſented by that multitude of colours in which your ſight is bewildered. The firſt in order, ſurrounded by a groupe abſurd and diſcordant in their attire, red, purple, black, white, and ſpeckled, with heads wholly or partially ſhaved, or with their hair ſhort, with red caps, ſquare caps, here with mitres, there with beards, is the ſtandard of the Roman pontiff, who, applying to the prieſthood the pre-eminence of his city in the civil order, has erected his ſupremacy into a point of religion, and made of his pride an article of faith.

At the right, you ſee the Greek Pontiff, who, proud of the rivalſhip ſet up by his metropolis, oppoſes equal pretenſions, and ſupports them againſt the Weſtern church, by the ſuperior antiquity of that of the Eaſt.

At

At the left, are the ſtandards of two recent chiefs *, who, throwing off a yoke that was become tyrannical, have, in their reform, erected altars againſt altars, and gained half Europe from the Pope. Behind them are the inferior ſects into which theſe grand parties are again ſubdivided, the Neſtorians, the Eutycheans, the Jacobites, the Iconoclaſts, the Anabaptiſts, the Preſbyterians, the Wicliſites, the Oſiandrins, the Manicheans, the Pietiſts, the Adamites, the Enthuſiaſts, the Quakers, the Weepers, together with a hundred others (8); all of diſtinct parties, of a perſecuting ſpirit when ſtrong, tolerant when weak, hating each other in the name of a God of peace, forming to themſelves an excluſive paradiſe in a religion of univerſal charity, each dooming the reſt, in another world, to endleſs torments, and realizing here the imaginary hell of futurity.

Next to this groupe, obſerving a ſingle ſtandard of a hyacinth colour, round which were gathered men in all the various dreſſes of Europe and Aſia: Here, ſaid I to the Genius, we ſhall at leaſt find unanimity.—At firſt ſight, replied he, and from an inci-

* Luther and Calvin.

dental and temporary circumſtance this would ſeem to be the caſe: but do you not know what ſyſtem of worſhip it is?—Then perceiving in Hebrew letters the monogram of God, and branches of the palm-tree in the hands of the Rabbins: Are not theſe, ſaid I, the children of Moſes, diſperſed over the earth, and who, holding every nation in abhorrence, have been themſelves univerſally deſpiſed and perſecuted?—Yes, replied the Genius, and it is for this very reaſon that, having neither time nor liberty to diſpute, they have preſerved the appearance of unanimity. But in their re-union, no ſooner ſhall they compare their principles, and reaſon upon their opinions, than they will be divided, as formerly, at leaſt into two principal ſects *, one of which, taking advantage of the ſilence of their legiſlator, and confining itſelf to the literal ſenſe of his books, will deny every dogma not therein clearly underſtood, and of conſequence will reject as inventions, the immortality of the ſoul, its tranſmigration into an abode of happineſs or ſeat of pain, its reſurrection, the laſt judgment, the exiſtence of angels, the revolt of a

* The Sadducees and the Phariſees.

fallen

fallen ſpirit, and the poetical ſyſtem of a world to come: and this favoured people, whoſe perfection conſiſts in the cutting off a morſel of their fleſh, this atom of people that in the ocean of mankind is but as a ſmall wave, and that pretends that the whole was made for them alone, will farther reduce by one half, in conſequence of their ſchiſm, their already trivial weight in the balance of the univerſe.

The Genius then directed my attention to another groupe, the individuals of which were clothed in white robes, had a veil covering the mouth, and were ranged round a ſtandard of the colour of the clouds gilded by the riſing ſun. On this ſtandard was painted a globe, one hemiſphere of which was black and the other white. The fate of theſe diſciples of Zoroaſter (9), continued he, this obſcure remnant of a people once ſo powerful, will be ſimilar to that of the Jews. Diſperſed as they are at preſent among other nations, and perſecuted by all, they receive without diſcuſſion the precepts that are taught them: but ſo ſoon as their Mobed and their Deſtours (10) ſhall be reſtored to

their full prerogatives, the controverſy will be revived reſpecting the good and the bad principle, the combats of Ormuz, God of light, and Ahrimanes, God of darkneſs; the literal or allegorical ſenſes of theſe combats; the good and evil Genii; the worſhip of fire and the elements; pollution and purification; the reſurrection of the body, or the ſoul, or both (11); the renovation of the preſent world, or the production of a new which is to ſucceed it. The Parſes will ever divide themſelves into ſects, by ſo much the more numerous as their families ſhall have contracted different manners or opinions during their diſperſion.

Next to theſe are ſtandards which exhibit upon a blue ground monſtrous figures of human bodies, double, triple, or quadruple, with the heads of lions, boars, and elephants, and tails of fiſhes, tortoiſes, &c. Theſe are the ſtandards of the Indian ſects, who find their Gods amidſt the animal creation, and the ſouls of their kindred in reptiles and inſects. Theſe men anxiouſly ſupport hoſpitals for the reception of hawks, ſerpents, and rats, and look with horror upon their bre-

thren

thren of mankind! They purify themſelves with the dung and urine of a cow, and conſider themſelves as polluted by the touch of a heretic! They wear a net over their mouths, leſt by accident a fly ſhould get down their throat, and they ſhould thus interrupt the progreſs of a purified ſpirit in its purgatory; but with all this humanity in unintelligible caſes, they think themſelves obliged to let a Paria (12) periſh with hunger rather than relieve him! They worſhip the ſame Gods, but inliſt themſelves under hoſtile ſtandards.

This firſt ſtandard, ſeparated from the reſt, and on which you ſee repreſented a figure with four heads, is the ſtandard of Brama, who, though the Creator of the univerſe, has neither followers nor temples, and who, reduced to ſerve as a pedeſtal to the Lingam (13), receives no other mark of attention than a little water ſprinkled every morning over his ſhoulder by the Bramin, and a barren ſong in his praiſe.

The ſecond ſtandard on which you ſee painted a kite, his body ſcarlet and his head white, is that of the Vichenou, who, though

preſerver of the univerſe, has paſſed a part of his life in malevolent actions. Sometimes you ſee him under the hideous forms of a boar and a lion tearing the entrails of mankind; ſometimes under that of a horſe (14), ſoon to appear upon the face of the earth, with a ſabre in his hand, to deſtroy the preſent inhabitants of the world, to darken the ſtars, to drive the planets from their ſpheres, to ſhake the whole earth, and to oblige the mighty ſerpent to vomit a flame which ſhall conſume the globes.

The third ſtandard is that of Chiven, the deſtroyer of all things, the God of deſolation, and who nevertheleſs has for his emblem the inſtrument of production; he is the moſt deteſtable of the three, and he has the greateſt number of followers. Proud of his attribute and character, his partizans in their devotions (15) expreſs every ſort of contempt for the other Gods, his equals and his brothers, and imitating the inconſiſtency that characteriſes him, they profeſs modeſty and chaſtity, and at the ſame time publicly crown with flowers, and bathe with milk and honey, the obſcene image of the Lingam.

Behind

Behind them came the leſs magnificent ſtandards of a multitude of Gods, male, female, and hermaphrodite, related to and connected with the three principal, who paſs their lives in inteſtine war, and are in this reſpect imitated by their worſhippers. Theſe Gods have need of nothing, and receive offerings without ceaſing. Their attributes are omnipotence and ubiquity, and a Bramin with ſome petty charm impriſons them in an image, or in a pitcher, and retails their favours according to his will and pleaſure.

At a ſtill greater diſtance you will obſerve a multitude of other ſtandards, which, upon a yellow ground, common to them all, have different emblems figured, and are the ſtandards of one God, who, under various names, is acknowledged by the nations of the Eaſt. The Chineſe worſhip him under the name of *Fôt* (16); the Japaneſe denominate him *Budſo*; the inhabitants of Ceylon, *Beddhou*; the people of Laos, *Chekia*; the Peguan, *Phta*; the Siameſe, *Sommona-Kodom*; the people of Thibet, *Budd* and *La*; all of them agree as to moſt points of his hiſtory; they celebrate his penitence, his ſufferings, his

faſts, his functions of mediator and expiator, the enmity of another God his adverſary, the combats of that adverſary and his defeat: but they diſagree reſpecting the means of recommending themſelves to his favour, reſpecting rites and ceremonies, reſpecting the dogmas of their interior and their public doctrine. Thus the Japaneſe Bonze, in a yellow robe, and with his head uncovered, preaches the eternity of ſouls and their ſucceſſive tranſmigration into different bodies; while his rival, the Sintoiſt, denies that the ſoul can exiſt independently of the ſenſes (17), and maintains that it is the mere reſult of the organization with which it is connected, and with which it periſhes, as the ſound of a flute is annihilated when you break it in pieces. Near him the Siameſe, with ſhaved eye-brows, and with the Talipat ſcreen in his hand (18), recommends alms-giving, purifications and offerings, at the very time that he believes in blind neceſſity and immutable fate. The Chineſe Ho-Chang ſacrifices to the ſouls of his anceſtors, while his neighbour, the follower of Confucius, pretends to diſcover his future deſtiny by the toſſing of counters

counters and the conjunction of the ſtars (19). Obſerve this infant attended by a numerous crowd of prieſts with yellow garments and bonnets: he is the grand Lama, and the God of Thibet has juſt become incarnate in his perſon (20). He however has a rival on the banks of the Baikal; nor is the Calmuc Tartar in this reſpect any way behind the Tartar of La-ſa. They are agreed in this important doctrine, that God can become incarnate only in a human body, and ſcorn the ſtupidity of the Indian, who looks down with reverence upon cow-dung, though they themſelves preſerve with no leſs awe the excrements of their pontiff (21).

As theſe ſtandards paſſed, an innumerable crowd of others preſented themſelves to our eyes, and the genius exclaimed: I ſhould never come to a concluſion, were I to detail to you all the different ſyſtems of belief which divide theſe nations. Here the Tartar Hordes adore, under the figure of animals, inſects, and birds, the good and the evil Genii, who, under a principal but indolent divinity, govern the univerſe, by their idolatry giving

us an image of the ancient paganiſm of the weſtern world. You ſee the ſtrange dreſs of their Chamans, a robe of leather fringed with little bells and rattles, embroidered with idols of iron, claws of birds, ſkins of ſerpents, and heads of owls: they are agitated with artificial convulſions, and with magical cries evoke the dead to deceive the living. In this place you behold the ſooty inhabitants of Africa, who, while they worſhip their *Fetiches*, entertain the ſame opinions. The inhabitant of Juida adores God under the figure of an enormous ſerpent, which for their misfortune the ſwine regard as a delicious morſel (22). The Teleutean dreſſes the figure of his God in a variety of gaudy colours, like a Ruſſian ſoldier; and the Kamchadale, finding that every thing goes on ill in this world and under his climate, repreſents God to himſelf under the figure of an ill-natured and arbitrary old man (23), ſmoking his pipe and ſitting in his *traineau* employed in the hunting of foxes and martins. In fine, there are a hundred other ſavage nations, who, entertaining none of theſe ideas of civilized countries

tries reſpecting God, the ſoul, and a future ſtate, exerciſe no ſpecies of worſhip, and yet are not leſs favoured with the gifts of nature, in the irreligion to which nature has deſtined them.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXI.

PROBLEM OF RELIGIOUS CONTRADICTIONS.

THE different groupes having taken their ſtations, and profound ſilence ſucceeding to the confuſed uproar of the multitude, the legiſlators ſaid: "Chiefs and doctors of the "people! you perceive how the various na- "tions of mankind, living apart, have hitherto "purſued different paths, each believing its "own to be that of truth. If truth, how- "ever, is one, and your opinions are oppoſite, "it is manifeſt that ſome of you muſt be in "error: and ſince ſo many men deceive them- "ſelves, what individual ſhall dare ſay, I am not "miſtaken? Begin, then, by being indulgent "reſpecting your diſputes and diſſentions. "Let us all ſeek truth, as if none of us had "poſſeſſion of it. The opinions which to this "day have governed the earth, produced by "chance, diſſeminated in obſcurity, admitted "without diſcuſſion, credited from a love of

"novelty

" novelty and imitation, have in a manner
" clandeſtinely uſurped their empire. It is
" time, if they are founded in reality, to give
" them the ſolemn ſtamp of certainty, and to
" legitimate their exiſtence. Let us this day
" cite them to a common and general exami-
" nation; let each make known his creed;
" let the united aſſembly be the judge, and
" let us acknowledge that to be the only true
" one, which is proper for the whole human
" race."

Then, in order of poſition, the firſt ſtandard at the left being deſired to ſpeak: " There " can be no doubt," ſaid they, " that ours is the " only true and infallible doctrine. In the " firſt place, it is revealed by God himſelf."

" So alſo is ours," exclaimed all the other ſtandards, " and there can be no room for " doubt."

" But it is at leaſt neceſſary to explain it," ſaid the legiſlators, " for it is impoſſible for " us to believe any thing of which we are " ignorant."

" Our doctrine" reſumed the firſt ſtandard, " is proved by numerous facts, by a crowd " of miracles, by reſurrections from the dead,

" by

" by torrents ſuddenly dried up, mountains " removed from their ſituations, &c. &c."

" We alſo," cried the reſt, " are in poſſeſſion " of miracles without number;" and each began to recite the moſt incredible things.

" Their miracles," replied the firſt ſtandard, " are imaginary, or the preſtiges of the evil " ſpirit who has deluded them."

To this it was anſwered by the others: " They are yours, on the contrary, that are " imaginary;" and each ſpeaking of himſelf added: " Ours are the only true ones, all " other miracles are falſe."

" Have you living witneſſes of their truth?" the legiſlators aſked.

" No," they univerſally anſwered: " they " are ancient facts, of which the witneſſes are " dead, but theſe facts are recorded."

" Be it ſo," replied the legiſlators: " but as " they contradict each other, who ſhall re- " concile them?"

" Juſt arbiters!" cried one of the ſtandards, " as a proof that our witneſſes have ſeen the " truth, they died in confirmation of it; and " our creed is ſealed with the blood of " martyrs."

" So

"So alſo is ours," exclaimed the reſt: "we "have thouſands of martyrs, who have died "in the moſt agonizing tortures, without in "a ſingle inſtance abjuring the truth." And the Chriſtians of every ſect, the Muſſulmans, the Indians, the Japaneſe, recounted endleſs legends of confeſſors, martyrs, penitents, &c.

One of theſe parties having denied the martyrology of the others: "We are ready," cried they, "to die ourſelves to prove the "infallibility of our creed."

Inſtantly a crowd of men of every ſect and of every religion, preſented themſelves to endure whatever torments might be inflicted on them; and numbers of them began to tear their arms, and to beat their head and their breaſt, without diſcovering any ſymptom of pain.

But the legiſlators putting a ſtop to this violence: "O men!" ſaid they to them, "hear "with compoſure the words we addreſs to "you. If you die to prove that two and two "make four, will this truth gain additional "confirmation by your death?"

"No," was the general anſwer.

"If you die to prove they are five, will "this make them five?"

"No," they again replied.

"What, then, does your perſuaſion prove, "ſince it makes no alteration in the exiſtence "of things. Truth is one; your opinions "are various; many of you muſt therefore "be miſtaken. And ſince man, as is evident, "can perſuade himſelf of error, how can his "perſuaſion be regarded as the demonſtra-"tion of evidence? Since error has its mar-"tyrs, what is the ſignet of truth? Since "the evil ſpirit works miracles, what is the "diſtinguiſhing characteriſtic of the Divi-"nity? Beſide, why this uniform reſort to "incomplete and inſufficient miracles? Why "not rather, inſtead of theſe violations of "nature, change the opinions of rational "beings? Why murder and terrify men, "inſtead of enlightening and inſtructing "them?

"O credulous mortals, and obſtinate in "your credulity! as we are none of us cer-"tain of what paſſed yeſterday, of what is "paſſing this very day before our eyes, how "can we ſwear to the truth of what hap-

"pened

"pened two thouſand years ago? Weak, and "at the ſame time proud beings! the laws "of nature are immutable and profound, our "underſtandings full of illuſion and frivolity, "and yet we would decide upon and com- "prehend every thing. But in reality it is "eaſier for the whole human race to fall into "error, than an atom of the univerſe to "change its nature."

"Well then," ſaid one of the doctors, "let "us leave the evidence of fact, ſince ſuch evi- "dence is equivocal, and let us attend to "the proofs of reaſon, and the intrinſic "merit of the doctrine itſelf."

An Iman of the law of Mahomet, with a look of confidence, then advanced in the ſand, and having turned himſelf towards Mecca, and uttered with emphaſis his confeſſion of faith: "Let God be praiſed!" ſaid he, in a grave and authoritative voice; "the "light ſhines in all its ſplendour, and the "truth has no need of examination." Then exhibiting the Koran: "Behold the light "and the truth in their genuine colours! In "this book every doubt is removed; it will "conduct the blind man ſafely, who ſhall

" receive without diſcuſſion the divine word,
" given to the prophet to ſave the ſimple
" and confound the wiſe. God hath appointed
" Mahomet to be his miniſter upon earth;
" he has delivered up the world to him, that
" he might ſubdue by his ſword ſuch as re-
" fuſe to believe in his law. Infidels diſpute
" his authority, and reſiſt the truth: their
" obduracy proceeds from God, who has
" hardened their hearts that he might in-
" flict upon them the moſt dreadful chaſtiſe-
" ments *."

Here a violent murmur from all ſides interrupted the Iman. " What man is this," cried every groupe, " who thus gratuitouſly " commits outrage? By what right does he " pretend, as conqueror and tyrant, to im- " poſe his creed on mankind? Has not God " created us as well as him with eyes, under- " ſtanding, and reaſon? Have we not an equal " right to make uſe of them in determining

* This paſſage contains the ſenſe and nearly the very words of the firſt chapter of the Koran; and the reader will obſerve in general, that, in the pictures that follow, the writer has endeavoured to give as accurately as poſſible the letter and ſpirit of the opinions of each party.

" what

" what we ought to reject, and what to be-
" lieve? If he have the right to attack, have
" not we the right to defend ourſelves? If he
" be content to believe without examination,
" are we therefore not to employ our reaſon
" in the choice of our creed?

" And what is this *ſplendid* doctrine which
" fears the *light?* What this apoſtle of a God
" of clemency who preaches only carnage
" and murder? What this God of juſtice who
" puniſhes a blindneſs which himſelf has
" cauſed? If violence and perſecution are the
" arguments of truth, mildneſs and charity
" muſt they be the indices of falſehood?"

A man advancing from the next groupe then ſaid to the Iman: " Admitting that
" Mahomet is the apoſtle of the better doc-
" trine, the prophet of the true religion,
" condeſcend to tell us, in practiſing this
" doctrine whom are we to follow, his ſon-in-
" law Ali, or his vicars Omar and Abou-
" bekre (24)?"

At the mention of theſe names a terrible ſchiſm aroſe among the Muſſulmans. The partiſans of Omar and of Ali, treating each other as heretics and blaſphemers, were

equally laviſh of execrations. The diſpute even became ſo violent, that it was neceſſary for the neighbouring groupes to interpoſe, to prevent their coming to blows.

Some degree of tranquillity being at length reſtored, the legiſlators ſaid to the Imans: "You ſee what are the conſequences which "reſult from your principles! were they "carried into practice, you would by your "enmity deſtroy each other till not an in-"dividual would remain: and is it not the "firſt law of God, that man ſhould live?" Then addreſſing themſelves to the other groupes: "This ſpirit of intolerance and "excluſion," ſaid they, "is doubtleſs ſhock-"ing to every idea of juſtice, and deſtroys "the whole baſis of morals and ſociety: ſhall "we not, however, before we entirely reject "this code, agree to hear ſome of its dogmas "recited, that we may not decide from forms "only, without having inveſtigated the reli-"gion itſelf?"

The groupes having conſented to the propoſal, the Iman began to explain to them how God, who before time had ſpoken to the nations ſunk in idolatry by twenty-four thouſand

thouſand prophets, had at length ſent the laſt, the extract and perfection of all the reſt, Mahomet, in whom was veſted the ſalvation of peace: he informed them that to prevent the word of truth from being any more perverted by infidels, the divine clemency had written with its own fingers the chapters of the Koran; and that the Koran, by virtue of its character of the word of God, was, like its author, uncreated and eternal. He proceeded to explain to them the dogmas of Iſlamiſm; that this book had been tranſmitted from heaven leaf by leaf in twenty-four thouſand miraculous viſions of the angel Gabriel; that the angel announced his approach by a ſmall ſtill knocking, which threw the prophet into a cold ſweat; that Mahomet had in one night traverſed ninety heavens, mounted upon the animal called Borak, one half woman and one half horſe; that being endowed with the gift of miracles, he walked in the ſunſhine unattended by a ſhadow, cauſed with a ſingle word trees already withered to reſume their verdure, filled the wells and the ciſterns with water, and cut in two equal parts the body of the moon; that, authorized by a commiſſion

from heaven, he had propagated, ſword in hand, a religion the moſt worthy of God for its ſublimity, the moſt ſuitable to man for the ſimplicity of its injunctions, conſiſting indeed only of eight or ten principal doctrines, ſuch as the unity of God; the authority of Mahomet, the only prophet of God; our duty to pray five times in a day; to faſt one month in the year; to repair to Mecca once at leaſt in our lives; to pay the tenth of all that we poſſeſs; to drink no wine, to eat no pork, and to make war upon the infidels (25); upon which conditions every Muſſulman, being himſelf an apoſtle and a martyr, ſhould enjoy in this life a thouſand bleſſings, and in the world to come, after a ſolemn trial, his ſoul being weighed in the balance of good works, his abſolution pronounced by the two black angels, and his progreſs performed over the bridge that croſſes the infernal pit, as narrow as a hair and as keen as a razor, ſhould be received into the ſeat of delights, bathed in rivers of milk and honey, embalmed in the perfumes of India and Arabia, and live in uninterrupted commerce with thoſe chaſte females, the celeſtial Houris, who preſent a perpetually

perpetually renewed virginity to the elect, who preſerve a perpetual vigour.

An involuntary ſmile was viſible in the countenance of every one at this relation; and the various groupes, reaſoning upon theſe articles of belief, unanimouſly ſaid: "Is it "poſſible for reaſonable beings to have faith "in ſuch reveries? Might one not ſuppoſe "that a chapter had been juſt read to us "from the *Thouſand and One Nights?*"

A Samoiede advancing in the ſand then ſaid: "The paradiſe of Mahomet is in my "opinion excellent: but one of the means "of obtaining it puzzles me extremely. If, "as this prophet ordains, it is neceſſary to "abſtain from meat and drink between the "riſing and ſetting of the ſun, how in our "country is ſuch a faſt practicable, where "the ſun continues above the horizon for ſix "months together?"

To vindicate the honour of their prophet, the Muſſulman doctors denied the poſſibility of this; but a hundred people bearing teſtimony to the fact, the infallibility of Mahomet ſuſtained a violent ſhock.

"It is ſingular," ſaid a European, "that God

" ſhould continually have revealed what was " going on in heaven, without ever having " informed us of what paſſes upon earth."

" Their pilgrimage," ſaid an American, " is to me an inſuperable difficulty. For let " us ſuppoſe a generation to be twenty-five " years, and the number of males exiſting on " the globe to be a hundred millions: in " this caſe, each being obliged to travel to " Mecca once during his life, there would be " annually engaged in the pilgrimage four " millions of men; and as it would be im- " practicable for them to return in the ſame " year, the number would be doubled, or in " other words would amount to eight millions. " Where are proviſions, accommodation, wa- " ter, and veſſels to be found for this univer- " ſal proceſſion? What numerous miracles " would it not be neceſſary to work!"

" The proof," ſaid a Catholic Divine, " that " the religion of Mahomet is not a revealed " religion is, that the majority of ideas upon " which it is founded exiſted for a long time " before it, and that it is nothing more than " a confuſed mixture formed out of the truths " of our holy religion and that of the Jews,

" which

" which an ambitious man has made ſerve
" his projects of dominion, and his worldly
" views. Turn over the pages of his book:
" you will ſee little elſe than the hiſtories of
" the Old and New Teſtament traveſtied
" into the moſt abſurd tales, and the reſt a
" tiſſue of vague and contradictory declama-
" tion, and ridiculous or dangerous precepts.
" Analyze the ſpirit of theſe precepts and the
" conduct of their apoſtle: you will find a
" ſubtle and daring character, which, to ar-
" rive at its end, works, it is true, with ad-
" mirable ſkill upon the paſſions of thoſe
" whom it wiſhes to govern. It addreſſes
" itſelf to ſimple and credulous men, and it
" tells them of prodigies; they are ignorant
" and jealous, and it flatters their vanity
" by deſpiſing ſcience; they are poor and
" rapacious, and it excites their avidity by
" the hope of plunder; having nothing at
" firſt to give them on earth, it creates trea-
" ſures in heaven; it makes them long for
" death as the ſupreme bleſſing; the daſtardly
" it threatens with hell; to the brave it
" promiſes paradiſe; the weak it ſtrengthens
" by the principle of fatality: in ſhort, it
" produces

" produces the attachment it requires, by " every allurement of the ſenſes, and the " faſcination of all the paſſions.

" How different is the character of the " Chriſtian doctrine! and how much does its " empire, eſtabliſhed on the wreck of every " natural inclination and the extinction of all " the paſſions, prove its celeſtial origin! " How forcibly does its mild and com- " paſſionate morality atteſt its emanation " from the Divinity! Many of its dogmas, " it is true, are beyond the reach of human " underſtanding, and impoſe on reaſon a " reſpectful ſilence; but this very circum- " ſtance the more fully confirms its revela- " tion, ſince the faculties of men could never " have invented ſuch ſublime myſteries."— Then, with the Bible in one hand, and the Four Evangeliſts in the other, the doctor began to relate that in the beginning, God (after having paſſed an eternity without doing any thing) conceived at length the deſign (without apparent motive) of forming the world out of nothing: that having in ſix days created the whole univerſe, he found himſelf tired on the ſeventh: that having placed

placed the firſt pair of human beings in a delightful garden to make them completely happy, be nevertheleſs forbad them to taſte of the fruit of one tree which he planted within their reach: that theſe firſt parents having yielded to temptation, all their race (as yet unborn) were condemned to ſuffer the penalty of a fault which they had no ſhare in committing: that after permitting the human ſpecies to damn themſelves for four or five thouſand years, this God of compaſſion ordered his well-beloved ſon, engendered without a mother and of the ſame age as himſelf, to deſcend upon the earth in order to be put to death, and this for the ſalvation of mankind, the majority of whom have nevertheleſs continued in the road to ſin and damnation: that to remedy this inconvenience, this God, the ſon of a woman, who was at once a mother and a virgin, after having died and riſen again, commences a new exiſtence every day, and under the form of a morſel of dough is multiplied a thouſand fold at the pleaſure of the baſeſt of mankind. Having explained theſe dogmas, he was going on to treat of the doctrine of the

Sacraments

Sacraments, of abſolution and anathema, of the means of purifying men from crimes of every ſort with a drop of water and the muttering half a dozen words; but he had no ſooner pronounced the names of indulgence, papal prerogative, ſufficient grace and effectual grace, than he was interrupted by a thouſand voices at once. It is a horrid corruption, cried the Lutherans, to pretend to ſell for money the pardon of ſin; it is contrary to the ſenſe of the goſpel, ſaid the Calviniſts, to talk of the real preſence in the Sacrament. The Pope, exclaimed the Janſeniſts, has no power to decide upon any thing without a council. Thirty ſects at once mutually accuſed each other of hereſy and blaſphemy, and their voices were ſo confuſed that it was no longer poſſible to diſtinguiſh a word they uttered.

After ſome time, ſilence being at length reſtored, the Muſſulmans ſaid to the legiſlators: "Since you have rejected our doctrine "as containing things incredible, can you "poſſibly admit that of the Chriſtians, which "is ſtill more contrary to juſtice and common "ſenſe? An immaterial and infinite God to

"transform

" transform himſelf into a man! To have a " ſon as old as himſelf! This God-man to " become bread, which is eaten and under- " goes digeſtion! What abſurdities have we " equal to theſe? Is it to theſe men belong " the excluſive right of exacting a blind " obedience? And will you accord to them " privileges of faith, to our detriment?"

Some ſavage tribes then advanced: "What," ſaid they, " becauſe a man and a woman eat " an apple ſix thouſand years ago, is the whole " human race to be involved in damnation? " And do you call God juſt? What tyrant " ever made the children reſponſible for the " ſins of their fathers? How can one man " anſwer for the actions of another? Would " not this be overthrowing every principle " of equity and reaſon?"

" Where," exclaimed others, " are the " witneſſes and proofs of all theſe pretended " facts? It is impoſſible to receive them " without evidence. The moſt trivial ac- " tion in a court of judicature requires " two witneſſes, and are we to believe all " this upon mere tradition and hearſay?"

A Jewiſh Rabbin then, addreſſing the aſ- ſembly,

ſembly, ſaid: "For the general facts we are "indeed ſureties; but as to the form and "application of thoſe facts, the caſe is dif- "ferent, and the Chriſtians are here con- "demned out of their own mouth. They "cannot deny that we are the ſtock from "which they are deſcended, the trunk upon "which they have been grafted: from "whence it follows by an inevitable dilemma, "that either our law is from God, and then "theirs is a hereſy, ſince it differs from ours; "or our law is not from God, and then what- "ever proves its falſehood is deſtructive of "theirs."

"But there is a proper line of diſtinction," ſaid the Chriſtian, "to which it is neceſſary "to attend. Your law is of God as typical "and preparative, not as final and abſolute; "you are but the image, of which we are the "reality."

"We are not ignorant," replied the Rab- bin, "that ſuch are your pretenſions; but "they are perfectly ſuppoſitious and falſe. "Your ſyſtem reſts entirely on myſtical (26), "viſionary, and allegorical interpretations. "You pervert the letter of our books, ſub-

"ſtitute

" ſtitute continually for the true ſenſe of a " paſſage the moſt chimerical ideas, and find " in them whatever is agreeable to your " fancy, juſt as a roving imagination diſ- " covers figures in the clouds. You have " thus imagined a ſpiritual Meſſiah, where " our prophets ſpeak only of a political king. " You have interpreted into a redemption of " the human race, what refers ſolely to the " re-eſtabliſhment of our nation. Your pre- " tended conception of the virgin is derived " from a phraſe which you have wreſted " from its true meaning. You conſtrue " every thing as you pleaſe. You even find " in our books your doctrine of the Trinity, " though they contain not the moſt indirect " alluſion to it, and though the idea was an " invention of profane nations, and admitted " into your code, together with a multitude " of other opinions of every worſhip and " ſect of which it is compoſed, during the " chaos and anarchy of the three firſt ages."

At theſe words, tranſported with indigna- tion, and crying out ſacrilege, blaſphemy! the Chriſtian doctors were diſpoſed to lay violent hands upon the Jew: and a motley groupe

groupe of monks, ſome in black, ſome in white, advancing with a ſtandard on which *pincers*, *a gridiron*, and *a funeral pile*, and the words, *juſtice*, *charity*, and *mercy*, were painted *, exclaimed: "It is proper to make an "example of this impious heretic, and to "burn him alive for the glory of God." And already they had pictured to their imaginations the ſcene of torture, when the Muſſulmans in a tone of irony ſaid to them: "Such is the religion of peace, whoſe "humble and humane ſpirit you have ſo "loudly vaunted! Such that evangelical "charity which combats incredulity with no "other weapon than mildneſs, and oppoſes "only patience to injuries! Hypocrites, it "is thus you deceive nations! It is in this "manner you have propagated your deſtruc-"tive errors! When weak, you have preach-"ed liberty, toleration, and peace; when "power has been in your hands, you have "practiſed violence and perſecution!".... And they were beginning to recite the wars and murders of Chriſtianity, when the legiſ-

* This deſcription anſwers exactly to the colours of the Inquiſition of Spaniſh Jacobins.

lators

lators, demanding ſilence, aſſuaged for a while the diſcord.

"It is not," replied the monks in a tone of affected mildneſs and humility, "ourſelves "that we would avenge, we are deſirous "only of defending the cauſe and glory of "God."

"And what right have you," ſaid the Imans, "to conſtitute yourſelves his repre- "ſentatives more than we? Have you pri- "vileges that we are not favoured with? "Are you beings of a different nature from "us?"

"To take upon ourſelves to defend God, is "to inſult his wiſdom and power," ſaid another groupe. "Does he not know better "than mortals what is becoming his dig- "nity!"

"Certainly," rejoined the monks; "but "his ways are ſecret."

"You, however," ſaid the Rabbins, "will "always find the difficulty inſuperable of "proving that you enjoy the excluſive pri- "vilege of comprehending them." And the Jews, proud of finding their cauſe ſupported, fondly pleaſed themſelves with the idea that

their books would be triumphant; when the Mobed* of the Parſes begged leave to ſpeak.

"We have heard," ſaid he to the legiſlators, "the account of the Jews and Chriſtians re- "ſpecting the origin of the world, and "though they have introduced various cor- "ruptions, they have related a number of "facts which our religion admits; but we "deny that they are to be attributed to the "Hebrew legiſlator. It was not he who "made known to mankind theſe ſublime "dogmas, theſe celeſtial events; it was not "to him that God revealed them, but to our "holy prophet Zoroaſter; and proofs of "this are to be found in the very books "in queſtion. If you examine with atten- "tion the detail of laws, of rights, and of "precepts, eſtabliſhed by Moſes, you will "no where find the moſt tacit indication of "what conſtitutes at preſent the baſis of the "Jewiſh and Chriſtian theology. You will "perceive no trace either of the immortality "of the ſoul, or a life to come, or hell, or

* Highprieſt.

"paradiſe,

" paradiſe, or the revolt of the principal " angel, author of all the evils which have " afflicted the human race, &c. Theſe ideas " were unknown to Moſes, and this appears " from indiſputable evidence, ſince it was not " till four hundred years after him that they " were firſt promulgated by Zoroaſter in " Aſia (27)."

The Mobed added, addreſſing himſelf to the Rabbins: " It was not till this epocha, till " after the age of your firſt kings, that theſe " ideas appeared in your writings; and then " their appearance was furtive and gradual, " according as there grew up a political re- " lation between your anceſtors and ours. " It was particularly at the period when, " conquered and diſperſed by the kings " of Nineveh and Babylon, your proge- " nitors reſorted to the banks of the Ti- " gris and the Euphrates, and reſided in " our country for three ſucceſſive genera- " tions, that they imbibed our manners and " opinions, which before they had regarded " with averſion, as contrary to their law. " When our king, Cyrus, had delivered them

" from ſlavery, they felt attached to us from
" ſentiments of gratitude; they became our
" diſciples and imitators, and introduced our
" peculiar doctrines into the corrected pub-
" lication of their ſacred books (28); for your
" Geneſis in particular was never the work
" of Moſes, but a compilation digeſted after
" the return from the Babyloniſh captivity,
" and containing in it the Chaldean opinions
" reſpecting the origin of the world.

" At firſt the pure followers of the law,
" oppoſing to the emigrants the letter of the
" text and the abſolute ſilence of the pro-
" phet, endeavoured to overpower theſe in-
" novations; but they ultimately prevailed,
" and our doctrines, modified according to
" your ideas, gave riſe to a new ſect. You
" expected a king, the reſtorer of your poli-
" tical independence; we announced a God,
" the regenerator of the world, and the ſa-
" viour of mankind. Theſe ideas blended
" together, conſtituted the tenets of the Eſ-
" ſenians, and through them became the
" baſis of Chriſtianity. Jews, Chriſtians,
" Mahometans, however lofty may be your
" pretenſions,

" pretenſions, you are, in your ſpiritual and " immaterial ſyſtem, only the blundering " followers of Zoroaſter!"

Having thus commenced his diſcourſe, the Mobed went on to the detail of his religion; and ſupporting his ſentiments by quotations from the Zadder and the Zendaveſta, he recounted in the ſame order as they are found in the book of Geneſis, the creation of the world in ſix *gahans* (29); the formation of a firſt man and a firſt woman in a peculiar and celeſtial habitation, under the reign of perfect good; the introduction of evil into the world by the great lizard, the emblem of Ahrimanes; the revolt and combat of this maleficent genius of darkneſs, againſt Ormuz the benevolent God of light; the diſtribution of angels into white and black, good and ill; their hierarchy conſiſting of cherubim, ſeraphim, thrones, dominions, &c.; the end of the world at the cloſe of ſix thouſand years; the coming of the Lamb, the regenerator of nature; the new world; the life to come in an abode of felicity or anguiſh; the paſſage of ſouls over the bridge of the abyſs; the celebration of the myſteries of Mithra; the

unleavened bread that is ſet apart for the initiated: the baptiſm of new-born children; extreme unction and auricular confeſſion (30): in a word, he repeated ſo many articles analogous to thoſe of the three preceding religions, that his diſcourſe ſeemed to be a commentary or a continuation of the Koran or the Apocalypſe.

But the Jewiſh, Chriſtian, and Mahometan doctors excepted to this detail, and treating the Parſes as idolatrous worſhippers of fire, charged them with falſehood, invention, and alteration of facts. A violent diſpute then aroſe reſpecting the dates of events, their order and ſucceſſion, reſpecting the origin of opinions, their tranſmiſſion from one people to another, the authenticity of the books which eſtabliſh them, the epocha when theſe books were compoſed, the character of their compilers, the value of their teſtimony; and the various parties proving, each againſt the reſt, contradictions, improbabilities, and the counterfeit nature of their books, accuſed one another of having founded their creed upon popular rumours, upon vague traditions, upon abſurd fables, invented by folly, and admitted without

without examination by unknown, ignorant, or partial writers, at doubtful periods, and different from thoſe to which their partiſans referred them.

A loud rumour was now excited under the ſtandards of the various Indian ſects, and the Bramins, entering their proteſt againſt the claims of the Jews and the Parſes, ſaid: "What are theſe upſtart and almoſt un-"known people, who thus arrogantly con-"ſider themſelves as the founders of nations, "and the depoſitories of the ſacred archives? "To hear their calculations of five or ſix "thouſand years, one would ſuppoſe that the "world was but of yeſterday, whereas our "monuments prove a duration of many "thouſands of centuries. And in what re-"ſpect are their books preferable to ours? "Are then the Vedes, the Chaſtres, the "Pourans, inferior to the Bible, the Zen-"daveſta, the Sadder (31)? Is not the teſti-"mony of our progenitors and our Gods, of "equal value with that of the Gods and "progenitors of the weſtern world? Oh! "were we permitted to reveal to profane "men the myſteries of our religion! Did

" not a ſacred veil juſtly hide our doctrine " from every eye!"....

The Bramins ſuddenly obſerving a profound ſilence: " How," ſaid the legiſlators, " can we admit your doctrine, if you refuſe " to make it known? How could its firſt " authors propagate it, when, having ſole " poſſeſſion of it, they regarded even their " own people as profane? Has heaven re- " vealed it that it might be kept a ſecret?"

The Bramins however perſiſted in their ſilence; and a European at this moment offering to ſpeak, remarked, that their ſecrecy was at preſent an empty form, that their ſacred books were divulged and their doctrine explained: he accordingly undertook to recapitulate its ſeveral articles.

Beginning with an abſtract of the four Vedes, the twenty-eight Pourans, and the five or ſix Chaſtres, he recounted how an immaterial, infinite, eternal, and *round* Being, after having paſſed an unlimited portion of time in ſelf-contemplation, deſirous at length of manifeſting himſelf, ſeparated the faculties of male and female which were in him, and operated an act of generation of which the

Lingam

Lingam remains the emblem: how from this firſt act were born three divine powers, of the names of Brama, Bichen, or Vichenou, and Chib or Chiven (32), the firſt deputed to create, the ſecond to preſerve, the third to deſtroy or change the form of the univerſe. He then detailed the hiſtory of their exploits and adventures, and related how Brama, proud of having created the world and the eight Bobouns (or ſpheres) of probation, and of being preferred to his equal Chib, this pride occaſioned between them a combat, in which the globes or celeſtial orbits were broken to pieces, as if they had been a baſket of eggs: how Brama, overcome in this conteſt, was reduced to ſerve as a pedeſtal to Chib, metamorphoſed into the Lingam: how Vichenou, the preſerver of the univerſe, had, in the diſcharge of his function, aſſumed nine animal and mortal forms; how under the firſt, that of a fiſh, he ſaved from the univerſal deluge a family by whom the earth was re-peopled; afterwards, in the ſhape of a tortoiſe (33), drew from the ſea of milk the mountain *Mandreguiri* (the Pole); then, under that of a boar, tore the entrails of the giant

giant *Erenniacheſſen*, by whom the earth had been ſunk in the abyſs of *Djele*, from which he delivered it; how he became incarnate under the form of the Black Shepherd, and bearing the name of *Chriſ-en* reſcued the world from the venomous ſerpent Calengam, whoſe head he cruſhed, after having himſelf received a wound in his heel.

Paſſing to the hiſtory of the ſecondary Genii, he unfolded to the aſſembly how the Eternal, for the diſplay of his glory, had created divers orders of angels, whoſe office it was to ſing his praiſes and direct the univerſe; that a part of theſe angels had revolted under the conduct of an ambitious chief, who wiſhed to uſurp the power of God, and take the reins of government into his own hands: that God precipitated them into a world of darkneſs as a puniſhment for their miſdeeds: that at laſt, touched with compaſſion, he conſented to withdraw them from thence, and to receive them again into favour, after previouſly ſubjecting them to a long ſtate of probation: that for this purpoſe, having created fifteen orbits or regions of planets, and bodies to inhabit them, he obliged theſe rebellious

rebellious angels to undergo eighty-ſeven tranſmigrations: that the ſouls, thus purified, returned to their primitive ſource, to the ocean of life from which they had emanated: that as all living beings contained a portion of this univerſal ſoul, it was an act of great criminality to deprive them of it. He was proceeding to develope the rites and ceremonies of this religion, when, ſpeaking of offerings and libations of milk and butter to Gods of wood and of braſs, he was interrupted by a univerſal murmur mixed with loud burſts of laughter.

Each of the different groupes reaſoned in its own particular manner reſpecting this ſyſtem. "They are idolaters," ſaid the Muſſulmans, "it is our duty to exterminate them".... "They are mad," ſaid the followers of Confucius, "it is our duty to cure them."... "What abſurd Gods," cried the reſt, "a ſet of "fat monkeys begrimmed with ſmoke, whom "they waſh like children in clouts, and from "whom they drive away the flies, lured by the "taſte of honey, who would otherwiſe defile "them with their excrements!"

At theſe words a Bramin, burſting with indignation,

indignation, exclaimed: "Theſe are inſcru-
"table myſteries, the profound emblems of
"truth, which you are not worthy to know."

"And how comes it," replied a Lama of Thibet, "that you are more worthy than
"we? Is it becauſe you pretend to be ſprung
"from the head of Brama, while the reſt of
"mankind derive their origin from the leſs
"noble parts of his body? If you would
"ſupport the fable of your origin, and the
"vain diſtinctions of your caſts, prove that
"you are of a nature different from us; prove
"at leaſt by hiſtorical teſtimony the allegories
"you maintain; nay, prove that you are
"really the authors of this ſyſtem; for on
"our part we are able to prove, if that were
"neceſſary, that you have only ſtolen and
"disfigured it; that you have borrowed the
"ancient paganiſm of the weſtern world,
"and blended it by an abſurd conceit with
"the purely ſpiritual nature of our Gods (34),
"a nature which ſtoops not to addreſs itſelf
"to the ſenſes, and was wholly unknown to
"the world till the miſſion of Beddou."

Inſtantly innumerable voices demanded to be informed of this nature, and to hear of that

that God with whoſe very name the majority of them were unacquainted. In purſuance of this demand, the Lama reſumed.

" In the beginning," ſaid he, " there was " one God, ſelf-exiſtent, who paſſed through " a whole eternity, abſorbed in the contempla- " tion of his own reflections, ere he deter- " mined to manifeſt thoſe perfections to " created beings, when he produced the " matter of the world. The four elements " at their production lay in a ſtate of mingled " confuſion, till he breathed upon the face of " the waters, and they immediately became " an immenſe bubble, ſhaped like an egg, " which when complete became the vault or " globe of the heavens in which the world is " incloſed (35). No ſooner was the earth " and the bodies of animals produced, than " God, the ſource of motion, beſtowed upon " them as a living ſoul a portion of his ſub- " ſtance. Thus the ſoul of every living " thing, being only a fraction or ſeparate " part of the univerſal ſoul, no percipient " being is liable to periſh, but merely changes " its form and mould as it paſſes ſucceſſively " into different bodies. But of all the ſub-

" ſtantial

" ſtantial forms that of man is moſt pleaſing
" to the Divine Being, as moſt reſembling
" his uncreated perfections; and man, when,
" by withdrawing himſelf from the com-
" merce of the ſenſes, he becomes abſorbed
" in the contemplation of his own nature,
" diſcovers the Divinity that reſides in it, and
" himſelf becomes worthy of Divinity. Thus
" is God inceſſantly rendering himſelf incar-
" nate; but his greateſt and moſt ſolemn in-
" carnation was three thouſand years ago, in
" the province of Caſſimere, under the name
" of Fôt or Beddou, for the purpoſe of teach-
" ing the doctrine of ſelf-denial and ſelf annihi-
" lation." The Lama proceeded to detail the hiſtory of Fôt, obſerving, that he had ſprung from the right intercoſtal of a virgin of the royal blood, who, when ſhe became a mother, did not the leſs continue to be a virgin: that the king of the country, uneaſy at his birth, was deſirous to put him to death, and cauſed all the males who were born at the ſame period to be maſſacred: that being ſaved by ſhepherds, Beddou lived in the deſert to the age of thirty years, at which time he opened his commiſſion, preaching the doctrine of truth

and

and caſting out devils: that he performed a multitude of the moſt aſtoniſhing miracles, ſpent his life in faſting and the ſevereſt mortifications, and at his death bequeathed to his diſciples the volume in which the principles of his religion are contained. The Lama then began to read—

"He that forſaketh his father and his "mother," ſays Fôt, "to follow me, ſhall be-"come a perfect Samanean (a heavenly "being).

"He that keepeth my precepts to the "fourth degree of perfection, ſhall acquire "the power of flying in the air, of moving "earth and heaven, of protracting or ſhorten-"ing his life, and of riſing again.

"The Samanean looks with contempt on "riches, and makes uſe only of ſuch things "as are ſtrictly neceſſary. He mortifies the "fleſh, ſubdues his paſſions, fixes his deſires "and affections on nothing terreſtrial, medi-"tates without ceaſing upon my doctrine, "endures injuries with patience, and bears "no enmity againſt his neighbour.

"Heaven and earth," ſays Fôt, "ſhall paſs "away; deſpiſe therefore your bodies which

" are compoſed of the four periſhable ele-
" ments, and think only of your immortal
" ſoul.

" Hearken not to the ſuggeſtions of the
" fleſh: fear and ſorrow are the produce of
" the paſſions: ſtifle the paſſions, and fear
" and ſorrow will thus be deſtroyed.

" Whoſoever dies," ſays Fôt, " without
" having received my doctrine, becomes again
" and again an inhabitant of the earth, till he
" ſhall have embraced it."

The Lama was going on with his extracts when the Chriſtians interrupted him, obſerving, that this religion was an alteration of theirs; that Fôt was Jeſus himſelf disfigured, and that the Lamas were nothing more than a degenerate ſect of the Neſtorians and Manicheans.

But the Lama (36), ſupported by all the Chamans, Bonzes, Gonnis, Talapoins of Siam, of Ceylon, of Japan, and of China, demonſtrated to the Chriſtians from their own Theologians, that the doctrine of the Samaneans was known through the Eaſt upwards of a thouſand years before Chriſtianity exiſted; that their name was cited previous to the reign of

of Alexander, and that that of Boutta or Beddou could be traced to a more remote antiquity than that of Jeſus—" And now, ſaid they, retorting upon the Chriſtians, " do you prove to us that you are not your- " ſelves degenerated Samaneans; that the " man whom you conſider as the author of " your ſect is not Fôt himſelf in a different " form. Demonſtrate his exiſtence by hiſ- " torical monuments of ſo remote a period " as thoſe which we have adduced (37); " for as it appears to be founded on no au- " thentic teſtimony, we abſolutely deny its " truth; and we maintain that your goſpels " are taken from the books of the Mythriacs " of Perſia, and the Eſſenians of Syria, who " were themſelves only reformed Sama- " neans (38)."

Theſe words excited a general outcry on the part of the Chriſtians, and a new diſpute more violent than any preceding one was on the point of taking place, when a groupe of Chineſe Chamans, and Talapoins of Siam came forward, pretending that they could eaſily adjuſt every difference, and produce in the aſſembly a uniformity of opinion. And

one of them ſpeaking for the reſt, ſaid: " It " is time that we ſhould put an end to all " theſe frivolous diſputes, by drawing aſide " the veil and expoſing to your view the *inte-* " *rior* and *ſecret* doctrine which Fôt himſelf, " on his death-bed, revealed to his diſci- " ples (39). Theſe various theological opi- " nions are mere chimeras; theſe accounts " of the attributes, actions and life of the " Gods are nothing more than allegories and " myſterious ſymbols, under which moral " ideas, and the knowledge of the operations " of nature in the action of the elements and " the revolutions of the planets, are inge- " niouſly depicted.

" The truth is, that there is no reality in " any thing; that all is illuſion, appearance, a " dream; that the moral metemſychoſis is " nothing more than a figurative ſenſe of " the phyſical metemſychoſis, of that ſuc- " ceſſive motion by which the elements of " which a body is compoſed, and which " never periſh, paſs, when the body itſelf is " diſſolved, into a thouſand others, and form " new combinations. The ſoul is merely the " vital principle reſulting from the properties

" of

" of matter, and the action of the elements in
" bodies, in which they create a ſpontaneous
" movement. To ſuppoſe that this reſult of
" organization, which is born with it, deve-
" loped with it, ſleeps with it, continues to
" exiſt when organization is no more, is a
" romance that may be pleaſing enough, but
" that is certainly chimerical. God himſelf
" is nothing more than the principal mover,
" the occult power diffuſed through every
" thing that has being, the ſum of its laws
" and its properties, the animating principle,
" in a word, the ſoul of the univerſe; which,
" by reaſon of the infinite diverſity of its
" connections and operations, conſidered
" ſometimes as ſimple and ſometimes as
" multiple, ſometimes as active and ſome-
" times as paſſive, has ever preſented to the
" human mind an inſolvable enigma. What
" we can comprehend with greateſt perſpi-
" cuity is, that matter does not periſh; that
" it poſſeſſes eſſential properties, by which
" the world is governed in a mode ſimilar to
" that of a living and organiſed being; that,
" with reſpect to man, the knowledge of its
" laws is what conſtitutes his wiſdom; that

" in their obſervance conſiſt virtue and merit;
" and evil, ſin, vice, in the ignorance and
" violation of them; that happineſs and miſ-
" fortune are the reſpective reſult of this ob-
" ſervance or neglect, by the ſame neceſſity
" that occaſions light ſubſtances to aſcend,
" heavy ones to fall, and by a fatality of
" cauſes and effects, the chain of which ex-
" tends from the ſmalleſt atom to the ſtars of
" greateſt magnitude and elevation (40)."

A crowd of Theologians of every ſect inſtantly exclaimed, that this doctrine was rank materialiſm, and thoſe who profeſſed it impious Atheiſts, enemies both of God and man, who ought to be extirpated from the earth.—" Strange reaſoning," replied the Chamans. " Suppoſing us to be miſtaken, which is by " no means impoſſible, ſince it is one of the " attributes of the human mind to be ſubject " to illuſion, what right have you to deprive " beings like yourſelves of the life which " God has given them? If heaven conſiders " us as culpable, and looks upon us with " horror, why does it diſpenſe to us the " ſame bleſſings as to you! If it treats us " with endurance, what right have you to be

" leſs

"leſs indulgent? Pious men, who ſpeak of "God with ſo much certainty and confi- "dence, condeſcend to tell us what he is; "explain, ſo that we may comprehend them, "thoſe abſtract and metaphyſical beings "which you call God and the ſoul; ſub- "ſtances without matter, exiſtence without "body, life without organs or ſenſations. If "you diſcover theſe beings by means of your "ſenſes, render them in like manner per- "ceptible to us. If you ſpeak of them only "upon teſtimony and tradition, ſhow us a "uniform recital, and give an identical and "determinate baſis to your creed."

There now aroſe a warm controverſy between the Theologians reſpecting the nature of God and his mode of acting and manifeſting himſelf; reſpecting the ſoul and its union with the body, whether it has exiſtence previous to the organs, or from the time of their formation only; reſpecting the life to come and another world; and every ſect, every ſchool, every individual, differing from the reſt as to all theſe points, and aſſigning for its diſſent plauſible reaſons and reſpectable but

oppoſite authorities, they were all involved in an inextricable labyrinth of contradictions.

At length, the legiſlators having reſtored ſilence, recalled the diſpute to its true object, and ſaid: "Leaders and inſtructors of the "people, you came hither for the purpoſe "of inveſtigating truth; and at firſt every "one of you, confident in his own infalli- "bility, demanded an implicit faith: pre- "ſently, however, you felt the contrariety of "your opinions, and conſented to ſubmit "them to a fair compariſon and a common "rule of evidence. You proceeded to ex- "poſe your proofs: you began with the "allegation of facts; but it preſently ap- "peared that every religion and every ſect "had its miracles and its martyrs, and had "an equal cloud of witneſſes to boaſt, who "were ready to prove the rectitude of their "ſentiments by the ſacrifice of their lives. "Upon this firſt point therefore the balance "remained equal.

"You next paſſed to proofs of reaſoning: "the ſame arguments were alternately ap- "plied to the ſupport of oppoſite propoſi- "tions;

" tions; the ſame aſſertions, equally gratui-
" tous were ſucceſſively advanced and re-
" pelled; every one was found to have an
" equal reaſon for denying his aſſent to the
" ſyſtem of the others. A farther conſe-
" quence that aroſe from thus confronting
" your ſyſtems was, that, notwithſtanding
" their diſſimilitude in ſome points, their
" reſemblance in others was not leſs ſtriking.
" Each of you claimed the firſt depoſit and
" the original diſcovery; each of you taxed
" his neighbour with adulteration and plagi-
" ariſm; and a previous queſtion to the em-
" bracing of any of your doctrines appeared
" to reſult from the hiſtory of opinions.

" A ſtill greater embarraſſment aroſe when
" you entered into the explication of your
" doctrines: the more aſſiduous were your
" endeavours, the more confuſed did they ap-
" pear; they reſted upon a baſis inacceſſible
" to human underſtanding, of conſequence
" you had no means to judge of their validity,
" and you readily admitted that, in aſſerting
" them, you were the echos of your fathers.
" Hence it became important to know how

"they had come into the hands of that "former generation, who had no means of "learning them different from yourſelves. "Thus the tranſmiſſion of theological ideas "from country to country, and their firſt "riſe in the human underſtanding, were "equally myſterious, and the queſtion be-"came every moment more complicated "with metaphyſical ſubtlety and antiquarian "reſearch.

"But as theſe opinions, however extraor-"dinary, have ſome origin; as all ideas, even "the moſt abſtracted and fantaſtical, have "in nature ſome phyſical model, we muſt "aſcend to that origin in order to diſcover "what this model is, and how the under-"ſtanding came by thoſe ideas of Deity, the "ſoul and immaterial beings, that are ſo "obſcure, and which form the foundation "of ſo many religious ſyſtems; we muſt "trace their lineal deſcent and the altera-"tions they have undergone in their various "ſucceſſions and ramifications. If there-"fore there are in this aſſembly men who "have made theſe objects their peculiar

"ſtudy,

" ſtudy, let them come forward and endea-
" vour to diſpel, in the preſence of the na-
" tions of the earth, the obſcurity of opi-
" nions in which for ſo long a period they
" have all wandered."

CHAP.

CHAP. XXII.

ORIGIN AND GENEALOGY OF RELIGIOUS IDEAS.

AT theſe words a new groupe, formed in an inſtant of individuals from every ſtandard, but undiſtinguiſhed by any, advanced in the ſand, and one of the members, ſpeaking in the name of the general body, ſaid:

"Legiſlators, friends of evidence and of truth!

"That the ſubject of which we treat ſhould be involved in ſo many clouds, is by no means aſtoniſhing, ſince, beſide the difficulties that are peculiar to it, thought itſelf has, till this moment, ever had ſhackles impoſed upon it, and free enquiry, by the intolerance of every religious ſyſtem, been interdicted. But now that thought is unreſtrained, and may develope all its powers, we will expoſe in the face of day, and ſubmit to the common judgment of aſſembled nations, ſuch rational truths as unprejudiced minds

minds have by long and laborious ſtudy diſcovered: and this, not with the deſign of impoſing them as a creed, but from a deſire of provoking new lights, and obtaining better information.

" Chiefs and inſtructors of the people, you are not ignorant of the profound obſcurity in which the nature, origin, and hiſtory of the dogmas you teach are inveloped. Impoſed by force and authority, inculcated by education, maintained by the influence of example, they were perpetuated from age to age, and habit and inattention ſtrengthened their empire. But if man, enlightened by experience and reflection, ſummon to the bar of mature examination the prejudices of his infancy, he preſently diſcovers a multitude of incongruities and contradictions which awaken his ſagacity, and call forth the exertion of his reaſoning powers.

" At firſt, remarking the various and oppoſite creeds into which nations are divided, we are led boldly to reject the infallibility claimed by each; and arming ourſelves alternately with their reciprocal pretenſions, to conceive that the ſenſes and the underſtanding

ing emanating directly from God, are a law not leſs ſacred, and a guide not leſs ſure than the indirect and contradictory codes of the prophets.

" If we proceed to examine the texture of the codes themſelves, we ſhall obſerve that their pretended divine laws, that is to ſay, laws immutable and eternal, have riſen from the complexion of times, of places, and of perſons; that theſe codes iſſue one from another in a kind of a genealogical order, mutually borrowing a common and ſimilar fund of ideas, which every inſtitutor modifies agreeably to his fancy.

" If we aſcend to the ſource of thoſe ideas, we ſhall find that it is loſt in the night of time, in the infancy of nations, in the very origin of the world, to which they claim alliance; and there, immerſed in the obſcurity of chaos, and the fabulous empire of tradition, they are attended with ſo many prodigies as to be ſeemingly inacceſſible to the human underſtanding. But this prodigious ſtate of things gives birth itſelf to a ray of reaſoning, that reſolves the difficulty; for if the miracles held out in ſyſtems of religion have

have actually exiſted; if, for inſtance, metamorphoſes, apparitions, and the converſations of one or more Gods, recorded in the ſacred books of the Hindoos, the Hebrews, and the Parſes, are indeed events in real hiſtory, it follows that nature in thoſe times was perfectly unlike the nature that we are acquainted with now; that men of the preſent age are totally different from the men that formerly exiſted; and, conſequently, that we ought not to trouble our heads about them.

" On the contrary, if thoſe miraculous facts have had no real exiſtence in the phyſical order of things, they muſt be regarded ſolely as productions of the human intellect: and the nature of man, at this day, capable of making the moſt fantaſtic combinations, explains the phenomenon of thoſe monſters in hiſtory. The only difficulty is to aſcertain how and for what purpoſe the imagination invented them. If we examine with attention the ſubjects that are exhibited by them, if we analize the ideas which they combine and aſſociate, and weigh with accuracy all their concomitant circumſtances, we ſhall find a ſolution perfectly conformable to the laws of nature.

nature. Thoſe fabulous ſtories have a figurative ſenſe different from their apparent one, they are founded on ſimple and phyſical facts: but theſe facts, being ill conceived and erroneouſly repreſented, have been disfigured and changed from their original nature by accidental cauſes dependent on the human mind, by the confuſion of ſigns made uſe of in the repreſentation of objects, by the equivocation of words, the defect of language, and the imperfection of writing. Theſe Gods, for example, who act ſuch ſingular parts in every ſyſtem, are no other than the phyſical powers of nature, the elements, the winds, the meteors, the ſtars, all which have been perſonified by the neceſſary mechaniſm of language, and the manner in which objects are conceived by the underſtanding. Their life, their manners, their actions, are only the operation of the ſame powers, and the whole of their pretended hiſtory no more than a deſcription of their various phenomena, traced by the firſt naturaliſt that obſerved them, but taken in a contrary ſenſe by the vulgar who did not underſtand it, or by ſucceeding generations who forgot it. In a word,

a word, all the theological dogmas reſpecting the origin of the world, the nature of God, the revelation of his laws, the manifeſtation of his perſon, are but recitals of aſtronomical facts, figurative and emblematical narratives of the motion and influence of the heavenly bodies. The very idea itſelf of the Divinity, which is at preſent ſo obſcure, abſtracted, and metaphyſical, was in its origin merely a compoſit of the powers of the material univerſe, conſidered ſometimes analytically, as they appear in their agents and their phenomena, and ſometimes ſynthetically, as forming one whole, and exhibiting an harmonious relation in all its parts. Thus the name God has been beſtowed ſometimes upon the wind, upon fire, water, and the elements; ſometimes upon the ſun, the ſtars, the planets, and their influences; ſometimes upon the univerſe at large, and the matter of which the world is compoſed; ſometimes upon abſtract and metaphyſical properties, ſuch as ſpace, duration, motion, and intelligence; but in every inſtance, the idea of a deity has not flowed from the miraculous revelation of an inviſible world, but has been

the natural reſult of human reflection, has followed the progreſs and undergone the changes of the ſucceſſive improvement of intellect, and has had for its ſubject the viſible univerſe and its different agents.

" It is then in vain that nations refer the origin of their religion to heavenly inſpiration; it is in vain that they pretend to deſcribe a ſupernatural ſtate of things as firſt in the order of events: the original barbarous ſtate of mankind, atteſted by their own monuments (41), belies all their aſſertions. Theſe aſſertions are ſtill more victoriouſly refuted by conſidering this great principle, *that man receives no ideas but through the medium of his ſenſes* (42): for from hence it appears, that every ſyſtem which aſcribes human wiſdom to any other ſource than experience and ſenſation, includes in it a ὑςερον πρότερον, and repreſents the laſt reſults of underſtanding as earlieſt in the order of time. If we examine the different religious ſyſtems which have been formed reſpecting the action of the Gods, and the origin of the world, we ſhall diſcover at every turn an anticipation in the order of narrating things, which

which could only be ſuggeſted by ſubſequent reflection. Reaſon, then, emboldened by theſe contradictions, heſitates not to reject whatever does not accord with the nature of things, and accepts nothing for hiſtorical truth that is not capable of being eſtabliſhed by argument and ratiocination. Its ideas and ſuggeſtions are as follow:

"Before any nation received from a neighbour nation dogmas already invented; before one generation inherited the ideas of another, none of theſe complicated ſyſtems had exiſtence. The firſt men, the children of nature, whoſe conſciouſneſs was anterior to experience, and who brought no preconceived knowledge into the world with them, were born without any idea of thoſe articles of faith which are the reſult of learned contention; of thoſe religious rites which had relation to arts and practices not yet in exiſtence; of thoſe precepts which ſuppoſe the paſſions already developed; of thoſe laws which have reference to a language and a ſocial order hereafter to be produced; of that God, whoſe attributes are abſtractions of the knowledge of nature, and the idea of whoſe

conduct is ſuggeſted by the experience of a deſpotic government; in fine, of that ſoul and thoſe ſpiritual exiſtences which are ſaid not to be the object of the ſenſes, but which, however, we muſt for ever have remained unacquainted with, if our ſenſes had not introduced them to us. Previouſly to arriving at theſe notions, an immenſe catalogue of exiſting facts muſt have been obſerved. Man, originally ſavage, muſt have learned from repeated trials the uſe of his organs. Succeſſive generations muſt have invented and refined upon the means of ſubſiſtence; and the underſtanding, at liberty to diſengage itſelf from the wants of nature, muſt have riſen to the complicated art of comparing ideas, digeſting reaſonings, and ſeizing upon abſtract ſimilitudes.

SECT. I. *Origin of the idea of God: Worſhip of the elements, and the phyſical powers of nature.*

" IT was not till after having ſurmounted thoſe obſtacles, and run a long career in the night of hiſtory, that man, reflecting on his ſtate, began to perceive his ſubjection to forces

forces ſuperior to his own and independent of his will. The ſun gave him light and warmth; fire burned, thunder terrified, the winds buffetted, water overwhelmed him; all the various natural exiſtences acted upon him in a manner not to be reſiſted. For a long time, an automaton, he remained paſſive, without enquiring into the cauſe of this action; but the very moment he was deſirous of accounting to himſelf for it, aſtoniſhment ſeized his mind; and paſſing from the ſurpriſe of a firſt thought to the reverie of curioſity, he formed a chain of reaſoning.

"At firſt, conſidering only the action of the elements upon him, he inferred, relatively to himſelf, an idea of weakneſs, of ſubjection, and relatively to them, an idea of power, of domination; and this idea was the primitive and fundamental type of all his conceptions of the Divinity.

"The action of the natural exiſtences, in the ſecond place, excited in him ſenſations of pleaſure or pain, of good or evil; by virtue of his organization, he conceived love or averſion for them, he deſired or dreaded their

preſence; and fear or hope was the principle of every idea of religion.

"Afterwards, judging every thing by compariſon, and remarking in thoſe beings a motion ſpontaneous like his own, he ſuppoſed there to be a will, an intelligence inherent in that motion, of a nature ſimilar to what exiſted in himſelf; and hence, by way of inference, he ſtarted a freſh argument.—Having experienced that certain modes of behaviour towards his fellow-creatures wrought a change in their affections and governed their conduct, he applied thoſe practices to the powerful beings of the univerſe. "When "my fellow-creature, of ſuperior ſtrength," ſaid he to himſelf, "is diſpoſed to injure me, "I humble myſelf before him, and my prayer "has the art of appeaſing him. I will pray "to the powerful beings that ſtrike me. I "will ſupplicate the faculties of the winds, "the planets, the waters, and they will hear "me. I will conjure them to avert the "calamities, and to grant me the bleſſings "which are at their diſpoſal. My tears will "move, my offerings propitiate them, and I "ſhall enjoy complete felicity."

"And,

"And, ſimple in the infancy of his reaſon, man ſpoke to the ſun and the moon, he animated with his underſtanding and has paſſions the great agents of nature; he thought by vain ſounds and uſeleſs practices to change their inflexible laws. Fatal error! He deſired that the water ſhould aſcend, the mountains be removed, the ſtone mount in the air; and ſubſtituting a fantaſtic to a real world, he conſtituted for himſelf beings of opinion, to the terror of his mind and the torment of his race.

"Thus the ideas of God and religion ſprung, like all others, from phyſical objects, and were in the underſtanding of man the produce of his ſenſations, his wants, the circumſtances of his life, and the progreſſive ſtate of his knowledge.

"As theſe ideas had natural beings for their firſt models, it reſulted from hence that the Divinity was originally as various and manifold as the forms under which he ſeemed to act: each being was a Power, a Genius, and the firſt men found the univerſe crowded with innumerable Gods.

"In like manner the ideas of the Divinity

having had for motors the affections of the human heart, they underwent an order of diviſion calculated from the ſenſations of pain and pleaſure, of love and hatred: the powers of nature, the Gods, the Genii, were claſſed into benign and maleficent, into good and evil ones; and this conſtitutes the univerſality of theſe two ideas in every ſyſtem of religion.

"Theſe ideas, analogous to the condition of their inventors, were for a long time confuſed and groſs. Wandering in woods, beſet with wants, deſtitute of reſources, men in their ſavage ſtate had no leiſure to make compariſons and draw concluſions. Suffering more ills than they taſted enjoyments, their moſt habitual ſentiment was fear, their theology terror, their worſhip confined to certain modes of ſalutation, of offerings which they preſented to beings whom they ſuppoſed to be ferocious and greedy like themſelves. In their ſtate of equality and independence, no one took upon him the office of mediator with Gods as inſubordinate and poor as himſelf. No one having any ſuperfluity to diſpoſe of, there exiſted no paraſite under the name

name of prieſt, nor tribute under the name of victim, nor empire under the name of altar; their dogma and morality, jumbled together, were only ſelf-preſervation; and their religion, an arbitrary idea without influence on the mutual relations exiſting between men, was but a vain homage paid to the viſible powers of nature.

"Such was the firſt and neceſſary origin of every idea of the Divinity."

The orator then addreſſing the ſavage nations, ſaid: "We appeal to you, who have received no foreign factitious ideas, whether your conceptions have not been formed preciſely in this manner? We aſk you alſo, learned theologians, if ſuch be not the unanimous record of all the monuments of antiquity (43)?

SECT. II. *Second ſyſtem: Worſhip of the Stars, or Sabeiſm.*

"BUT thoſe ſame monuments offer us a more methodical and more complicated ſyſtem, that of the worſhip of all the ſtars, adored at one time under their proper form, at another under emblems and figurative ſymbols. This

worſhip was alſo the effect of the knowledge of man in phyſics, and derived immediately from the firſt cauſes of the ſocial ſtate; that is to ſay, from wants and arts of the firſt degree, the elements as it were in the formation of ſociety.

"When men began to unite in ſociety, they found it neceſſary to enlarge the means of their ſubſiſtence, and conſequently to apply themſelves to agriculture; and the practice of agriculture required the obſervation and knowledge of the heavens (44). It was neceſſary to know the periodical return of the ſame operations of nature, the ſame phenomena of the ſkies; it was neceſſary to regulate the duration and ſucceſſion of the ſeaſons, months and year. In order to this it was requiſite to become acquainted with the march of the ſun, which in its zodiacal revolution ſhowed itſelf the firſt and ſupreme agent of all creation; then of the moon, which by its changes and returns regulated and diſtributed time; finally of the ſtars, and even of the planets, which, by their appearance and diſappearance on the horizon and the nocturnal hemiſphere, formed the minuteſt

eſt diviſions. In a word it was neceſſary to eſtabliſh an entire ſyſtem of aſtronomy, to form an almanac; and from this labour there quickly and ſpontaneouſly reſulted a new manner of conſidering the dominant and governing powers. Having obſerved that the productions of the earth bore a regular and conſtant connection with the phenomena of the heavens; that the birth, growth and decay of each plant, were allied to the appearance, exaltation and decline of the ſame planet, the ſame groupe of ſtars; in ſhort, that the langour or activity of vegetation ſeemed to depend on celeſtial influences, men began to infer from this an idea of action, of power, in thoſe bodies, ſuperior to terreſtrial beings; and the ſtars diſpenſing ſcarcity or abundance, became powers, Genii (45), Gods, authors of good and evil.

" As the ſtate of ſociety had already introduced a methodical hierarchy of ranks, employments and conditions, men, continuing to reaſon from compariſon, tranſferred their new acquired notions to their theology, and the reſult was a complicated ſyſtem of gradual Divinities, in which the ſun, as the firſt

God,

God, was a military chief, a political king; the moon, a queen, his conſort; the planets, ſervants, bearers of commands, meſſengers: and the multitude of ſtars, a nation, an army of heroes, of Genii, appointed to govern the world under the command of their officers; every individual had a name, functions, attributes, drawn from its connections and influences, and even a ſex derived from the gender of its appellation (46).

"As the ſtate of ſociety had introduced certain uſages and complex practices, worſhip, leading the van, adopted ſimilar ones. Ceremonies, ſimple and private at firſt, became public and ſolemn; offerings were more rich and more numerous; rites more methodical; places of aſſembly, chapels and temples were erected; officers, pontiffs, created to adminiſter; forms and epochas were ſettled; and religion became a civil act, a political tie. But in this developement it altered not its firſt principles, and the idea of God was ſtill that of phyſical beings, operating good or ill, that is to ſay, impreſſing ſenſations of pain or pleaſure: the dogma was the knowledge of their laws or modes of acting; virtue

and

and ſin the obſervance or infringement of thoſe laws; and morality, in its native ſimplicity, a judicious practice of all that is conducive to the preſervation of exiſtence, to the well-being of the individual and of his fellow-creatures (47).

"Should it be aſked at what epoch this ſyſtem took birth, we ſhall anſwer, ſupported by the authority of the monuments of aſtronomy itſelf, that its principles can be traced back with certainty to a period of nearly ſeventeen thouſand years (48). Should we farther be aſked to what people or nation it ought to be attributed, we ſhall reply, that thoſe ſelf-ſame monuments, ſeconded by unanimous tradition, attribute it to the firſt tribes of Egypt. And when reaſon finds in that region a concurrence of all the phyſical circumſtances calculated to give riſe to it; when it finds at once a zone of heaven, in vicinity of the tropic, equally free from the rains of the equator, and the fogs of the north (49); when it finds there the central point of the antique ſphere; a ſalubrious climate; an immenſe yet manageable river; a land fertile without art, without fatigue; inundated,

inundated, without peſtilential exhalations; ſituate between two ſeas which lave the ſhores of the richeſt countries—it becomes manifeſt that the inhabitant of the diſtricts of the Nile, inclined to agriculture from the nature of his ſoil; to commerce, from the facility of communication; to geometry, from the annual neceſſity of meaſuring his poſſeſſions; to aſtronomy, from the ſtate of his heaven, ever open to obſervation, muſt firſt have paſſed from the ſavage to the ſocial ſtate, and conſequently attained that phyſical and moral knowledge proper to civilized man.

"It was thus, upon the diſtant ſhores of the Nile, and among a nation of ſable complexion, that the complex ſyſtem of the worſhip of the ſtars, as connected with the produce of the ſoil and the labours of agriculture, was conſtructed. The worſhip of the ſtars under their proper forms, or their natural attributes, was a ſimple proceſs of the human underſtanding; but in a ſhort time the multiplicity of objects, their relations, their action and re-action, having confounded the ideas and the ſigns that repreſented them, a

conſequence

conſequence reſulted as abſurd in its nature as pernicious in its tendency.

SECT. III. *Third Syſtem: Worſhip of ſymbols, or idolatry.*

"FROM the inſtant this agricolar race had turned an eye of obſervation on the ſtars, they found it neceſſary to diſtinguiſh individuals or groupes, and to aſſign to each a proper name. A conſiderable difficulty here preſented itſelf; for on the one hand, the celeſtial bodies, ſimilar in form, offered no peculiar character by which to denominate them; and on the other hand, language, poor and in a ſtate of infancy, had no expreſſions for ſo many new and metaphyſical ideas. The uſual ſtimulus of genius, neceſſity, conquered all obſtacles. Having remarked that in the annual revolution, the renewal and periodical appearance of the productions of the earth were conſtantly connected with the riſing and ſetting of certain ſtars, and with their poſition relatively to the ſun, the mind, by a natural mechaniſm, aſſociated in its thought terreſtrial and celeſtial objects, which had in fact a certain alliance; and applying

to

to them the ſame ſign, it gave to the ſtars and the groupes it formed of them, the very names of the terreſtrial objects to which they bore affinity (50).

"Thus the Ethiopian of Thebes called ſtars of inundation, or of *Aquarius*, thoſe under which the river began to overflow*; ſtars of the ox or bull, thoſe under which it was convenient to plough the earth; ſtars of the lion, thoſe under which that animal, driven by thirſt from the deſerts, made his appearance on the banks of the Nile; ſtars of the ſheaf, or of the harveſt maid, thoſe under which the harveſts were got in; ſtars of the lambs, ſtars of the goat, thoſe under which thoſe valuable animals brought forth their young; and thus was a firſt part of the difficulty reſolved.

"On the other hand, man, having remarked in the beings that ſurrounded him certain qualities peculiar to each ſpecies, and having invented a name by which to deſign them, ſpeedily diſcovered an ingenious mode of generalizing his ideas, and transferring the name already

* This muſt have been June. See Note (46).

invented

invented to every thing bearing a ſimilar or analogous property or agency, enriched his language with a multiplicity of metaphors and tropes.

"Thus the ſame Ethiopian, having obſerved that the return of the inundation anſwered conſtantly to the appearance of a very beautiful ſtar towards the ſource of the Nile, which ſeemed to warn the huſbandman againſt being ſurpriſed by the waters, he compared this action with that of the animal who by barking gives notice of danger, and called this ſtar the dog, the barker *(Syrius)*. In the ſame manner he called ſtars of the crab, thoſe which ſhowed themſelves when the ſun, having reached the bounds of the tropic, returned backwards and ſideways like the crab or *Cancer*; ſtars of the wild goat, thoſe which, the ſun being arrived at its greateſt altitude, at the top of the horary gnomon, imitated the action of that animal who delights in climbing the higheſt rocks; ſtars of the balance, thoſe which, the days and nights being of the ſame length, ſeemed to obſerve an equilibrium like that inſtrument; ſtars of the ſcorpion, thoſe which were perceptible when certain regular winds brought a burning vapour like

the poiſon of the ſcorpion. In the ſame manner he called by the name of rings and ſerpents the figured traces of the orbits of the ſtars and planets (51); and this was the general means of appellation of all the heavenly bodies, taken in groupes or individually, according to their connection with rural and terreſtrial operations, and the analogies which every nation found them to bear to the labours of the field and the objects of their climate and ſoil.

"From this proceeding it reſulted, that abject and terreſtrial beings entered into aſſociation with the ſuperior and powerful beings of the heavens; and this aſſociation became more rivetted every day by the very conſtitution of language and the mechaniſm of the mind. Men would ſay, by a natural metaphor: "The bull ſpreads upon the earth the "germins of fecundity (in ſpring); and brings "back abundance by the revival of vegeta-"tion. The lamb (or ram) delivers the "heavens from the malevolent Genii of "winter; and ſaves the world from the ſer-"pent (emblem of the wet ſeaſon). The ſcor-"pion pours out his venom upon the earth, "and ſpreads diſeaſes and death, &c."

This

"This language, underſtood by every body, was at firſt attended with no inconvenience; but, in proceſs of time, when the almanac had been regulated, the people, who could do without further obſervation of the ſkies, loſt ſight of the motive which led to the adoption of theſe expreſſions; and the allegory ſtill remaining in the practices of life, became a fatal ſtumbling-block to the underſtanding and reaſon. Habituated to join to ſymbols the ideas of their models, the mind finally confounded them; then thoſe ſame animals which the imagination had raiſed to heaven, deſcended again on the earth; but in this return, decked in the livery and inveſted with the attributes of the ſtars, they impoſed upon their own authors. The people, imagining that they ſaw their Gods before them, found it a more eaſy taſk to offer up their prayers. They demanded of the ram of their flock, the influence which they expected from the celeſtial ram; they prayed the ſcorpion not to pour out his venom upon Nature; they revered the fiſh of the river, the crab of the ſea, and the ſcarabeus of the ſlime; and by a ſeries of

corrupt, but inſeparable analogies, they loſt themſelves in a labyrinth of conſequent abſurdities.

"Such was the origin of this ancient and ſingular worſhip of animals; ſuch the train of ideas by which the character of the Divinity became common to the meaneſt of the brute creation; and thus was formed the vaſt, complicated, and learned theological ſyſtem which, from the banks of the Nile, conveyed from country to country by commerce, war, and conqueſt, invaded all the old world; and which, modified by times, by circumſtances, and by prejudices, is ſtill to be found among a hundred nations, and ſubſiſts to this day as the ſecret and inſeparable baſis of the theology of thoſe even who deſpiſe and reject it."

At theſe words, murmurs being heard in various groupes: "I repeat it," continued the orator. "People of Africa! hence, for example, has ariſen among you the adoration of your *Fetiches*, plants, animals, pebbles, bits of wood, before which your anceſtors would never have been ſo abſurd as to proſtrate themſelves, if they had not ſeen in them

taliſmans, partaking of the nature of the ſtars (52). Nations of Tartary! this is equally the origin of your *Marmouzets*, and of the whole train of animals with which your Chamans ornament their magic robes. This is the origin of thoſe figures of birds and ſerpents, which all the ſavage nations, with myſtic and ſacred ceremonies, imprint on their ſkin. Indians! it is in vain you cover yourſelves with the veil of myſtery: the hawk of your God Vichenou is but one of the thouſand emblems of the ſun in Egypt, and his incarnations in a fiſh, boar, lion, turtle, together with all his monſtrous adventures, are nothing more than the metamorphoſes of the ſame ſtar, which, paſſing ſucceſſively through the ſigns of the twelve animals *, was ſuppoſed to aſſume their forms, and to act their aſtronomical parts (53). Japeneſe! your bull which breaks the egg of the world, is merely that of the heavens, which, in times of yore, opened the age of the creation, the equinox of Spring. Rabbins, Jews! that ſame bull is the *Apis* worſhipped in Egypt, and which your anceſtors

* The Zodiac.

adored in the idol of the golden calf. It is alſo your bull, children of Zoroaſter! that, ſacrificed in the ſymbolic myſteries of Mithra, ſhed a blood fertilizing to the world. Laſtly, your bull of the Apocalypſe, Chriſtians! with his wings, the ſymbol of the air, has no other origin: your lamb of God, immolated, like the bull of Mithra, for the ſalvation of the world, is the ſelf-ſame ſun in the ſign of the celeſtial ram, which, in a ſubſequent age, opening the equinox in his turn, was deemed to have rid the world of the reign of evil, that is to ſay, of the ſerpent, of the large ſnake, the mother of winter and emblem of the Ahrimanes or Satan of the Perſians, your inſtitutors. Yes, vainly does your imprudent zeal conſign idolaters to the torments of the Tartarus which they have invented: the whole baſis of your ſyſtem is nothing more than the worſhip of the ſtar of day, whoſe attributes you have heaped upon your chief perſonage. It is the ſun which, under the name of Orus, was born, like your God, in the arms of the celeſtial virgin, and paſſed through an obſcure, indigent, and deſtitute childhood, anſwering to the

ſeaſon of cold and froſt. It is the ſun, which under the name of Oſiris, perſecuted by Typhon and the tyrants of the air, was put to death, laid in a dark tomb, the emblem of the hemiſphere of winter, and which, riſing afterwards from the inferior zone to the higheſt point of the heavens, awoke triumphant over giants and the deſtroying angels. Ye prieſts! from whom the murmurs proceed, you wear yourſelves its ſigns all over your bodies. Your tonſure is the diſk of the ſun; your ſtole its Zodiac (54); your roſaries the ſymbols of the ſtars and planets. Pontiffs and prelates! your mitre, your croſier, your mantle, are the emblems of Oſiris; and that crucifix of which you boaſt the myſtery, without comprehending it, is the croſs of Serapis, traced by the hands of Egyptian prieſts on the plan of the figurative world, which, paſſing through the equinoxes and the tropics, became the emblem of future life and reſurrection, becauſe it touched the gates of ivory and horn through which the ſoul was to paſs in its way to heaven."

Here the doctors of the different groupes looked with aſtoniſhment at one another, but

none of them breaking ſilence, the orator continued.

" Three principal cauſes concurred to produce this confuſion of ideas. Firſt, the neceſſity, on account of the infant ſtate of language, of making uſe of figurative expreſſions to depict the relations of things; expreſſions that, paſſing afterwards from a proper to a general, form a phyſical to a moral ſenſe, occaſioned, by their equivocal and ſynonymous terms, a multiplicity of miſtakes.

" Thus having at firſt ſaid, that the ſun ſurmounted and paſſed in its courſe through the twelve animals, they afterwards ſuppoſed that it combated, conquered, and killed them, and from this was compoſed the hiſtorical life of Hercules.

" Having ſaid that it regulated the period of rural operations, of ſeed time and of harveſt; that it diſtributed the ſeaſons, ran through the climates, ſwayed the earth, &c. it was taken for a legiſlative king, a conquering warrior, and hence they formed the ſtories of Oſiris, of Bacchus, and other ſimilar Gods.

" Having ſaid that a planet entered into a

ſign,

ſign, the conjunction was denominated a marriage, adultery, inceſt (55): having farther ſaid, that it was buried, becauſe it ſunk below the horizon, returned to light and gained its ſtate of eminence, they gave it the epithet of dead, riſen again, carried into heaven, &c.

"The ſecond cauſe of confuſion was the material figures themſelves, by which thoughts were originally painted, and which, under the name of hieroglyphics, or ſacred characters, were the firſt invention of the mind. Thus to denote an inundation, and the neceſſity of preſerving one's-ſelf from it, they painted a boat, the veſſel Argo; to expreſs the wind, they painted a bird's wing; to ſpecify the ſeaſon, the month, they delineated the bird of paſſage, inſect, or animal, which made its appearance at that epoch; to expreſs winter they drew a hog, or a ſerpent, which are fond of moiſt and miry places. The combination of theſe figures had alſo a meaning, and was ſubſtituted for words and phraſes* (56). But as there was nothing fixed or preciſe in this ſort of language, as the number of thoſe

* See the examples cited in note (45).

figures and their combinations became exceſſive and burdenſome to the memory, confuſions and falſe interpretations were the firſt and obvious reſult. Genius having afterwards invented the more ſimple art of applying ſigns to ſounds, of which the number is limited, and of painting the word inſtead of the thought, hieroglyphic pictures were, by means of alphabetical writing, brought into diſuſe; and from day to day their forgotten ſignifications made way for a variety of illuſions, equivoques, and errors.

" Laſtly, the civil organization of the firſt ſtates was a third cauſe of confuſion. Indeed, when the people began to apply themſelves to agriculture, the formation of the rural calendar requiring continual aſtronomical obſervations, it was neceſſary to chuſe individuals whoſe province it ſhould be to watch the appearance and ſetting of certain ſtars, to give notice of the return of the inundation, of particular winds and rains, and the proper time for ſowing every ſpecies of grain. Theſe men, on account of their office, were exempted from the common occupations, and the ſociety provided for their

ſubſiſtence,

ſubſiſtence. In this ſituation, ſolely occupied in making obſervations, they ſoon penetrated the great phenomena of nature, and dived into the ſecret of various of her operations. They became acquainted with the courſe of the ſtars and planets; the connection which their abſence and return had with the productions of the earth and the activity of vegetation: the medicinal or nutritive properties of fruits and plants; the action of the elements, and their reciprocal affinities. But, as there were no means of communicating this knowledge otherwiſe than by the painful and laborious one of oral inſtruction, they imparted it only to their friends and kindred; and hence reſulted a concentration of ſcience in certain families, who, on this account aſſumed to themſelves excluſive privileges, and a ſpirit of corporation and ſeparate diſtinction fatal to the public weal. By this continued ſucceſſion of the ſame labours and enquiries, the progreſs of knowledge it is true was haſtened, but, by the myſtery that accompanied it, the people, plunged daily in the thickeſt darkneſs, became more ſuperſtitious and more ſlaviſh. Seeing human beings

beings produce certain phenomena, announce, as it were at will, eclipſes and comets, cure diſeaſes, handle noxious ſerpents, they ſuppoſed them to have intercourſe with celeſtial powers; and, to obtain the good or have the ills averted which they expected from thoſe powers, they adopted theſe extraordinary human beings as mediators and interpreters. And thus were eſtabliſhed in the very boſom of ſtates ſacrilegious corporations of hypocritical and deceitful men, who arrogated to themſelves every kind of power; and prieſts, being at once aſtronomers, divines, naturaliſts, phyſicians, necromancers, interpreters of the Gods, oracles of the people, rivals of kings or their accomplices, inſtituted under the name of religion an empire of myſtery, which to this very hour has proved ruinous to the nations of mankind."

At theſe words the prieſts of all the groupes interrupted the orator; with loud cries, they accuſed him of impiety, irreligion, blaſphemy, and were unwilling he ſhould proceed: but the legiſlators having obſerved, that what he related was merely a narrative of hiſtorical facts; that if thoſe facts were falſe or forged,

it

it would be an eaſy matter to refute them; and that if every one were not allowed the perfect liberty to declare his opinion, it would be impoſſible to arrive at truth—he thus went on with his diſcourſe.

"From all theſe cauſes, and the perpetual aſſociation of diſſimilar ideas, there followed a ſtrange maſs of diſorders in theology, morality, and tradition. And firſt, becauſe the ſtars were repreſented by animals, the qualities of the animals, their likings, their ſympathies, their averſions, were transferred to the Gods and ſuppoſed to be their actions. Thus the God *Ichneumon* made war againſt the God crocodile; the God wolf wanted to eat the God ſheep; the God ſtork devoured the God ſerpent; and the Deity became a ſtrange, whimſical, ferocious being, whoſe idea miſled the judgment of man, and corrupted both his morals and his reaſon.

"Again, as every family, every nation, in the ſpirit of its worſhip adopted a particular ſtar or conſtellation for its patron, the affections and antipathies of the emblematical brute were transferred to the ſectaries of this worſhip; and the partiſans of the God dog

were

were enemies to thoſe of the God wolf; the worſhippers of the God bull, abhorred thoſe who fed upon beef, and religion became the author of combats and animoſities, the ſenſeleſs cauſe of frenzy and ſuperſtition (57).

"Farther, the names of the animal ſtars having, on account of this ſame patronage, been conferred on nations, countries, mountains, and rivers, thoſe objects were alſo taken for Gods; and hence there aroſe a medley of geographical, hiſtorical, and mythological beings, by which all tradition was involved in confuſion.

"In fine, from the analogy of their ſuppoſed actions the planetary gods having been taken for men, heroes, and kings; kings and heroes took in their turn the actions of the Gods for models, and became, from imitation, warlike, conquering, ſanguinary, proud, laſcivious, indolent; and religion conſecrated the crimes of deſpots, and perverted the principles of governments.

SECT. IV. *Fourth ſyſtem: Worſhip of two principles, or Dualiſm.*

"MEANWHILE the aſtronomical prieſts, enjoying in their temples peace and abundance, made every day freſh progreſs in the ſciences; and the ſyſtem of the world gradually diſplaying itſelf before their eyes, they ſtarted ſucceſſively various hypotheſes as to its agents and effects, which became ſo many ſyſtems of theology.

"The navigators of the maritime nations, and the caravans of the Aſiatic and African Nomades, having given them a knowledge of the earth from the Fortunate Iſlands to Serica, and from the Baltic to the ſources of the Nile, they diſcovered, by a compariſon of the different Zones, the rotundity of the globe, which gave riſe to a new theory. Obſerving that all the operations of Nature, during the annual period, were ſummed up in two principal ones, that of producing and that of deſtroying; that upon the major part of the globe, each of theſe operations was equally accompliſhed from one to the other equinox; that is to ſay, that during the ſix

months of ſummer all was in a ſtate of procreation and increaſe, and during the ſix months of winter all in a ſtate of languor and nearly dead, they ſuppoſed nature to contain two contrary powers always ſtruggling with and reſiſting each other; and conſidering in the ſame light the celeſtial ſphere, they divided the pictures, by which they repreſented it into two halves or hemiſpheres, ſo that thoſe conſtellations which appeared in the ſummer heaven formed a direct and ſuperior empire, and thoſe in the winter heaven an oppoſite and inferior one. Now as the ſummer conſtellations were accompanied with the ſeaſon of long, warm, and unclouded days, together with that of fruits and harveſts, they were deemed to be the powers of light, fecundity, and creation; and by tranſition from a phyſical to a moral ſenſe, to be Genii, angels of ſcience, beneficence, purity, virtue: in like manner the winter conſtellations, being attended with long nights and the polar fogs, were regarded as genii of darkneſs, deſtruction, death, and, by ſimilar tranſition, as angels of wickedneſs, ignorance, ſin, vice. By this diſpoſal, heaven was divided

into two domains, two factions; and the analogy of human ideas opened already a vaſt career to the flights of imagination; but a particular circumſtance determined, if it did not occaſion the miſtake and illuſion. (Conſult Plate II. at the end of the volume.)

" In the projection of the celeſtial ſphere drawn by aſtronomical prieſts (58), the Zodiac and the conſtellations diſpoſed in a circular order, preſented their halves in diametrical oppoſition: the winter hemiſphere was adverſe, contrary, oppoſite to, being the Antipodes of, that of ſummer. By the continued metaphor theſe words were converted into a moral ſenſe, and the adverſe angels and Genii became rebels and enemies (59). From that period the whole aſtronomical hiſtory of the conſtellations was turned into a political hiſtory; the heavens became a human ſtate, where every thing happened as it does on earth. Now as the exiſting ſtates, for the moſt part deſpotic, had their monarchs, and as the ſun was the apparent ſovereign of the ſkies, the ſummer hemiſphere (empire of light), and its conſtellations (a nation of white angels), had for king an enlightened,

intelligent,

intelligent, creative, benign God; and as every rebellious faction muſt have its chief, the hemiſphere of winter (the ſubterraneous empire of darkneſs and woe), together with its ſtars (a nation of black angels, giants, or demons), had for leader a malignant Genius, whoſe part was aſſigned, by the different people of the earth, to that ſtar which appeared to them the moſt remarkable. In Egypt it was originally the Scorpion, the firſt ſign of the Zodiac after the Balance, and the hoary chief of the wintry ſigns: then it was the bear or the polar aſs, called Typhon, that is to ſay, deluge (60), on account of the rains which poured down upon the earth during the dominion of that ſtar. In Perſia, at a ſubſequent period (61), it was the ſerpent, which, under the name of Ahrimanes, formed the baſis of the ſyſtem of Zoroaſter; and it is the ſame, Chriſtians and Jews, that is become your ſerpent of Eve (the celeſtial origin), and that of the croſs; in both caſes the emblem of Satan, the great adverſary of the Ancient of Days, ſung by Daniel. In Syria it was the hog or wild boar, enemy of Adonis, becauſe in that country the office of the

Northern

Northern bear was made to devolve upon the animal whoſe fondneſs for mire and dirt is emblematical of winter. And it is for this reaſon that you, children of Moſes and of Mahomet, hold this animal in abhorrence, in imitation of the prieſts of Memphis and Balbec, who deteſted him as the murderer of their God the ſun. This is likewiſe, O Indians! the type of your Chib-en, which was once the Pluto of your brethren the Greeks and Romans; your Brama alſo (God the creator), is only the Perſian Ormuzd, and the Oſiris of Egypt, whoſe very name expreſſes a creative power, producer of forms. And theſe Gods were worſhipped in a manner analogous to their real or fictitious attributes; and this worſhip, on account of the difference of its objects, was divided into two diſtinct branches. In one, the benign God received a worſhip of joy and love; whence are derived all religious acts of a gay nature (62), feſtivals, dances, banquets, offerings of flowers, milk, honey, perfumes; in a word, of every thing that delights the ſenſes and the ſoul. In the other, the malign God, on the contrary, received a worſhip of fear and pain; whence originated

all religious acts of the ſombre kind (63), tears, grief, mourning, ſelf-denial, blood-offerings, and cruel ſacrifices.

" From the ſame ſource flowed the diviſion of terreſtrial beings into pure and impure, ſacred or abominable, according as their ſpecies was found among the reſpective conſtellations of the two Gods, and made a part of their domains. This produced, on one hand, the ſuperſtitions of pollution and purification; and on the other, the pretended efficacious virtues of amulets and taliſmans.

" You now underſtand," continued the orator, addreſſing himſelf to the Indians, Perſians, Jews, Chriſtians and Muſſulmans, " you now underſtand the origin of thoſe ideas of combats and rebellion, which equally pervade your reſpective mythology. You perceive what is meant by white and black angels; by the cherubs and ſeraphs with heads of an eagle, a lion or a bull; the Deus, devils or demons with horns of goats and tails of ſnakes; the thrones and dominions, ranged in ſeven orders or gradations, like the ſeven ſpheres of the planets; all of them beings acting

acting the ſame parts, partaking of the ſame attributes in the Vedas, the Bibles, or the Zendaveſta; whether their chief be Ormuzd or Brama, Typhon or Chib-en, Michael or Satan; whether their form be that of giants with a hundred arms and feet of ſerpents, or that of Gods metamorphoſed into lions, ſtorks, bulls and cats, as they appear in the ſacred tales of the Greeks and Egyptians: you perceive the ſucceſſive genealogy of theſe ideas, and how in proportion to their remoteneſs from their ſources, and as the mind of man became refined, their groſs forms were purified, and reduced to a ſtate leſs ſhocking and repulſive.

"But, juſt as the ſyſtem of two oppoſite principles or deities originated in that of ſymbols; in the ſame manner you will find a new ſyſtem ſpring out of this, to which it ſerved in its turn as a foundation and ſupport."

SECT. V. *Myſtical or moral worſhip, or the ſyſtem of a future ſtate.*

"IN reality, when the vulgar heard talk of a new heaven and another world, they ſoon gave a body to theſe fictions; they erected on

it a ſolid ſtage and real ſcenes; and their notions of geography and aſtronomy ſerved to ſtrengthen, if they did not give riſe to the alluſion.

"On the one hand, the Phenician navigators, thoſe who paſſed the pillars of Hercules to fetch the pewter of Thule and the amber of the Baltic, related that at the extremity of the world, the boundaries of the ocean (the Mediterranean), where the ſun ſets to the countries of Aſia, there were fortunate Iſlands, the abode of an everlaſting ſpring; and at a farther diſtance, hyperborean regions, placed under the earth (relatively to the tropics), where reigned an eternal night*. From theſe ſtories, badly underſtood, and no doubt confuſedly related, the imagination of the people compoſed the Elyſian Fields (64), delightful ſports in a world below, having their heaven, their ſun and their ſtars; and Tartarus, a place of darkneſs, humidity, mire, and chilling froſt. Now, inaſmuch as mankind, inquiſitive about all that of which they are ignorant, and deſirous of a protracted exiſt-

* Nights of ſix months duration.

ence,

ence, had already exerted their faculties reſpecting what was to become of them after death; inaſmuch as they had early reaſoned upon that principle of life which animates the body, and which quits it without changing the form of the body, and had conceived to themſelves airy ſubſtances, phantoms and ſhades, they loved to believe that they ſhould reſume in the ſubterranean world that life which it was ſo painful to loſe; and this abode appeared commodious for the reception of thoſe beloved objects which they could not prevail on themſelves to renounce.

"On the other hand, the aſtrological and philoſophical prieſts told ſuch ſtories of their heavens as perfectly quadrated with theſe fictions. Having, in their metaphorical language, denominated the equinoxes and ſolſtices the gates of heaven, or the entrance of the ſeaſons, they explained the terreſtrial phenomena by ſaying, that through the gate of horn (firſt the bull, afterwards the ram), vivifying fires deſcended, which, in ſpring, gave life to vegetation; and aquatic Spirits, which cauſed, at the ſolſtice, the overflowing

of the Nile: that through the gate of ivory (originally the Bowman, or Sagittarius, then the Balance) and through that of Capricorn, or the urn, the emanations or influences of the heavens returned to their ſource and reaſcended to their origin; and the milky Way which paſſed through the doors of the ſolſtices, ſeemed to them to have been placed there on purpoſe to be their road and vehicle (65). The celeſtial ſcene farther preſented, according to their Atlas, a river (the Nile, deſignated by the windings of the Hydra); together with a barge (the veſſel Argo), and the dog Sirius, both bearing relation to that river of which they foreboded the overflowing. Theſe circumſtances added to the preceding ones, increaſed the probability of the fiction; and thus, to arrive at Tartarus or Elyſium, ſouls were obliged to croſs the rivers Styx and Acheron, in the boat of Charon the ferryman, and to paſs through the doors of horn and ivory, which were guarded by the maſtiff Cerberus. At length a civil uſage was joined to all theſe inventions, and gave them conſiſtency.

"The inhabitants of Egypt having remarked

marked that the putrefaction of dead bodies became in their burning climate the ſource of peſtilence and diſeaſes, the cuſtom was introduced, in a great number of ſtates, of burying the dead at a diſtance from the inhabitated diſtricts, in the deſert which lies at the Weſt. To arrive there it was neceſſary to croſs the canals of the river in a boat, and to pay a toll to the ferryman, otherwiſe the body, remaining unburied, would have been left a prey to wild beaſts. This cuſtom ſuggeſted to her civil and religious legiſlators, a powerful means of affecting the manners of her inhabitants, and addreſſing ſavage and uncultivated men with the motives of filial piety and reverence for the dead; they introduced, as a neceſſary condition, the undergoing that previous trial which ſhould decide whether the deceaſed deſerved to be admitted upon the footing of his family honours into the *black city*. Such an idea too well accorded with the reſt of the buſineſs not to be incorporated with it: it accordingly entered for an article into religious creeds, and hell had its Minos and its Radamanthus, with

the wand, the chair, the guards and the urn, after the exact model of this civil tranſaction. The Divinity then, for the firſt time, became a ſubject of moral and political conſideration, a legiſlator, by ſo much the more formidable as, while his judgment was final and his decrees without appeal, he was unapproachable to his ſubjects. This mythological and fabulous creation, compoſed as it was of ſcattered and diſcordant parts, then became a ſource of future puniſhments and rewards, in which divine juſtice was ſuppoſed to correct the vices and errors of this tranſitory ſtate. A ſpiritual and myſtical ſyſtem, ſuch as I have mentioned, acquired ſo much the more credit as it applied itſelf to the mind by every argument ſuited to it. The oppreſſed looked thither for an indemnification, and entertained the conſoling hope of vengeance: the oppreſſor expected by the coſtlineſs of his offerings to ſecure to himſelf impunity, and at the ſame time employed this principle to inſpire the vulgar with timidity: kings and prieſts, the heads of the people, ſaw in it a new ſource of power, as they reſerved to themſelves

themſelves the privilege of awarding the favours or the cenſure of the great judge of all, according to the opinion they ſhould inculcate of the odiouſneſs of crimes and the meritoriouſneſs of virtue.

"Thus, then, an inviſible and imaginary world entered into competition with that which was real. Such, O Perſians, was the origin of your renovated earth, your city of reſurrection, placed under the equator, and diſtinguiſhed from all other cities by this ſingular attribute, that the bodies of its inhabitants caſt no ſhade (66). Such, O Jews and Chriſtians, diſciples of the Perſians, was the ſource of your new Jeruſalem, your paradiſe and your heaven, modelled upon the aſtrological heaven of Hermes. Meanwhile, your hell, O ye Muſſulmans, a ſubterraneous pit ſurmounted by a bridge, your balance of ſouls and good works, your judgment pronounced by the angels Monkir and Nekir, derives its attributes from the myſterious ceremonies of the cave of Mithra (67); and your heaven is exactly coincident with that of Oſiris, Ormudz and Brama."

SECT.

SECT. VI. *Sixth Syſtem: The animated world, or worſhip of the univerſe under different emblems.*

"WHILE the nations were loſing themſelves in the dark labyrinth of mythology and fables, the phyſiological prieſts, purſuing their ſtudies and enquiries about the order and diſpoſition of the univerſe, came to freſh reſults, and ſet up freſh ſyſtems of powers and moving cauſes.

"Long confined to ſimple appearances, they had only ſeen in the motion of the ſtars an unknown play of luminous bodies, which they ſuppoſed to roll round the earth, the central point of all the ſpheres; but from the moment they had diſcovered the rotundity of our planet, the conſequences of this firſt fact led them to other conſiderations, and from inference to inference they roſe to the higheſt conceptions of aſtronomy and phyſics.

"In truth, having conceived the enlightened and ſimple idea, that the celeſtial globe is a ſmall circle inſcribed in the greater circle of the heavens, the theory of the concentral

circles naturally preſented itſelf to their hypotheſis, to reſolve the unknown circle of the terreſtrial globe by known points of the celeſtial circle; and the meaſure of one or ſeveral degrees of the meridian, gave preciſely the total circumference. Then taking for compaſs the diameter of the earth, a fortunate genius deſcribed with auſpicious boldneſs the immenſe orbits of the heavens; and, by an unheard of abſtraction, man, who ſcarcely peoples the grain of ſand of which he is the inhabitant, embraced the infinite diſtances of the ſtars, and launched himſelf into the abyſs of ſpace and duration. There a new order of the univerſe preſented itſelf, of which the petty globe that he inhabited no longer appeared to him to be the center: this important part was transferred to the enormous maſs of the ſun, which became the inflamed pivot of eight circumjacent ſpheres, the movements of which were henceforward ſubmitted to exact calculation.

"The human mind had already done a great deal, by undertaking to reſolve the diſpoſition and order of the great beings of nature; but not contented with this firſt effort, it wiſhed

alſo

alſo to reſolve its mechaniſm, and diſcover its origin and motive principle. And here it is that, involved in the abſtract and metaphyſical depths of motion and its firſt cauſe, of the inherent or communicated properties of matter, together with its ſucceſſive forms and extent, or, in other words, of boundleſs ſpace and time, theſe phyſiological divines loſt themſelves in a chaos of ſubtle argument and ſcholaſtic controverſy.

"The action of the ſun upon terreſtrial bodies, having firſt led them to conſider its ſubſtance as pure and elementary fire, they made it the focus and reſervoir of an ocean of igneous and luminous fluid, which, under the name of ether, filled the univerſe, and nouriſhed the beings contained therein. They afterwards diſcovered, by the analyſis of a more accurate philoſophy, this fire, or a fire ſimilar to it, entering into the compoſition of all bodies, and perceived that it was the grand agent in that ſpontaneous motion, which in animals is denominated life, and in plants vegetation. From hence they were led to conceive of the mechaniſm and action of the univerſe, as of a homogeneous WHOLE, a ſingle

a ſingle body, whoſe parts, however diſtant in place, had a reciprocal connection with each other (69); and of the world as a living ſubſtance, animated by the organical circulation of an igneous or rather electrical fluid (70), which, by an analogy borrowed from men and animals, was ſuppoſed to have the ſun for its heart (71).

"Meanwhile, among the theological philoſophers, one ſect beginning from theſe principles, the reſult of experiment, ſaid: That nothing was annihilated in the world; that the elements were unperiſhable; that they changed their combinations, but not their nature; that the life and death of beings were nothing more than the varied modifications of the ſame atoms; that matter contained in itſelf properties, which were the cauſe of all its modes of exiſting; that the world was eternal (72), having no bounds either of ſpace or duration. Others ſaid: That the whole univerſe was God; and, according to them, God was at once effect and cauſe, agent and patient, moving principle and thing moved, having for laws the invariable properties which conſtitute fatality;

and they designated their idea sometimes by the emblem of PAN (the GREAT ALL); or of Jupiter, with a starry front, a planetary body, and feet of animals; or by the symbol of the Orphic egg *, whose yolk suspended in the middle of a liquid encompassed by a vault, represented the globe of the sun swimming in ether in the middle of the vault of heaven (73); or by the emblem of a large round serpent, figurative of the heavens, where they placed the first principle of motion, and for that reason of an azure colour, studded with gold spots (the stars), and devouring his tail, that is, re-entering into himself, by winding continually like the revolutions of the spheres; or by the emblem of a man, with his feet pressed and tied together to denote immutable existence, covered with a mantle of all colours, like the appearance of nature, and wearing on his head a sphere of gold (74), figurative of the sphere of the planets; or by that of another man sometimes seated upon the flower of *Lotos*, borne upon the abyss of the waters, at others reclined upon

* Vide Œdip. Ægypt. tom. II. page 205.

a pile

a pile of twelve cuſhions, ſignifying the twelve celeſtial ſigns. And this, O nations of India, Japan, Siam, Thibet, and China, is the theology, which, invented by the Egyptians, has been tranſmitted down and preſerved among yourſelves, in the pictures you give of Brama, Beddou, Sommanacodom, and Omito. This, O ye Jews and Chriſtians, is the counterpart of an opinion, of which you have retained a certain portion, when you deſcribe God as *the breath of life moving upon the face of the waters*, alluding to the wind (75), which at the origin of the world, that is, at the departure of the ſpheres from the ſign of the Crab, announced the overflowing of the Nile, and ſeemed to be the preliminary of creation."

SECT. VII. *Seventh ſyſtem: Worſhip of the* SOUL *of the* WORLD, *that is, the element of fire, the vital principle of the univerſe.*

"BUT a third ſet of the theological philoſophers, diſguſted with the idea of a being at once effect and cauſe, agent and patient, and uniting in one and the ſame nature all contrary attributes, diſtinguiſhed the moving principle from the thing moved; and laying it

it down as a datum that matter was in itſelf inert, they pretended that it received its properties from a diſtinct agent of which it was only the envelope or caſe. Some made this agent the igneous principle, the acknowledged author of all motion; others made it the fluid called ether, becauſe it was thought to be more active and ſubtile: now, as they denominated the vital and motive principle in animals, a ſoul, a ſpirit; and as they always reaſoned by compariſon, and particularly by compariſon with human exiſtence, they gave to the motive principle of the whole univerſe the name of ſoul, intelligence, ſpirit; and God was the vital ſpirit, which, diffuſed through all beings, animated the vaſt body of the world. This idea was repreſented ſometimes by You-piter, eſſence of motion and animation, principle of exiſtence, or rather exiſtence itſelf (76); at other times by Vulcan, or *Phtha*, elementary principle of fire, or by the altar of Veſta, placed centrally in her temple, like the ſun in the ſpheres; and again by *Kneph*, a human being dreſſed in deep blue, holding in his hands a ſceptre and a girdle (the Zodiac), wearing on his

his head a cap with feathers, to expreſs the fugacity of thought, and producing from his mouth the great egg (77).

"As a conſequence from this ſyſtem, every being containing in itſelf a portion of the igneous or etherial fluid, the univerſal and common mover, and that fluid, ſoul of the world, being the Diety, it followed that the ſouls of all beings were a part of God himſelf, partaking of all his attributes, that is, being an indiviſible, ſimple, and immortal ſubſtance; and hence is derived the whole ſyſtem of the immortality of the ſoul, which at firſt was eternity (78). Hence alſo its tranſmigrations known by the name of metempſychoſis, that is to ſay, paſſage of the vital principle from one body to another; an idea which ſprung from the real tranſmigration of the material elements. Such, O Indians, Budſoiſts, Chriſtians, Muſſulmans, was the origin of all your ideas of the ſpirituality of the ſoul! Such was the ſource of the reveries of Pythagoras and Plato, your inſtitutors, and who were themſelves but the echoes of another, the laſt ſect of viſionary philoſophers that it is neceſſary to examine.

SECT. VIII. *Eighth ſyſtem: The world a machine: worſhip of the Demi-ourgos, or ſupreme artificer.*

"HITHERTO the theologians, in exerciſing their faculties on the detached and ſubtile ſubſtances of ether and the igneous principle, had not however ceaſed to treat of exiſtences palpable and perceptible to the ſenſes, and their theology had continued to be the theory of phyſical powers, placed ſometimes excluſively in the ſtars, and ſometimes diſſeminated through the univerſe. But at the period at which we are arrived, ſome ſuperficial minds, loſing the chain of ideas which had directed theſe profound enquiries, or ignorant of the facts which ſerved as their baſis, rendered abortive all the reſults that had been obtained from them, by the introduction of a ſtrange and novel chimera. They pretended that the univerſe, the heavens, the ſtars, the ſun, differed in no reſpect from an ordinary machine; and applying to this hypotheſis a compariſon drawn from the works of art, they erected an edifice of the moſt whimſical ſophiſms. "A machine," ſaid

ſaid they, "cannot form itſelf, there muſt be "a workman to conſtruct it; its very exiſt- "ence implies this. The world is a machine: "it has therefore an artificer (79)."

"Hence the *Demi-ourgos*, or ſupreme artificer, the autocrator and ſovereign of the univerſe. It was in vain that the ancient philoſophy objected to the hypotheſis, that this artificer did not ſtand in leſs need of parents and an author, and that a ſcheme, which added only one link to the chain by taking the attribute of eternity from the world and giving it to the creator, was of little value. Theſe innovators, not contented with a firſt paradox, added a ſecond, and applying to their artificer the theory of human underſtanding, pretended that the *Demi-ourgos* faſhioned his machine upon an archetype or idea extant in his mind. In a word, juſt as their maſters, the natural philoſophers, had placed the *primum mobile* in the ſphere of the fixed ſtars, under the appellation of intelligence and reaſon, ſo their apes, the ſpiritualiſts, adopting the ſame principle, made it an attribute of the *Demi-ourgos*, repreſenting this being as a diſtinct ſubſtance, neceſſarily exiſting, to which

they applied the terms of *Mens* or *Logos*, in other words, underſtanding and ſpeech. Separately from this being, they held the exiſtence of a ſolar principle, or ſoul of the world, which, taken with the preceding, made three gradations of divine perſonages; firſt, the *Demi-ourgos*, or ſupreme artificer; ſecondly, the *Logos*, underſtanding or ſpeech: and thirdly, the ſpirit or ſoul of the world (80). And this, O Chriſtians, is the fiction on which you have founded your doctrine of the Trinity; this is the ſyſtem, which, born a Heretic in the Egyptian temples, tranſmitted a Heathen to the ſchools of Greece and Italy, is now Catholic or Orthodox by the converſion of its partiſans, the diſciples of Pythagoras and Plato, to Chriſtianity.

"Thus the Deity, after having been originally conſidered as the ſenſible and various action of meteors and the elements; then as the combined power of the ſtars, conſidered in their relation to terreſtrial objects; then as thoſe terreſtrial objects themſelves, in conſequence of confounding ſymbols with the things they repreſented; then as the complex power of Nature, in her two principal operations

operations of production and deſtruction; then as the animated world without diſtinction of agent and patient, cauſe and effect; then as the ſolar principle or element of fire acknowledged as the ſole cauſe of motion—the Diety, I ſay, conſidered under all theſe different views, became at laſt a chimerical and abſtract being; a ſcholaſtic ſubtlety of ſubſtance without form, of body without figure; a true delirium of the mind beyond the power of reaſon at all to comprehend. But in this its laſt transformation, it ſeeks in vain to conceal itſelf from the ſenſes: the ſeal of its origin is indelibly ſtamped upon it. All its attributes, borrowed from the phyſical attributes of the univerſe, as immenſity, eternity, indiviſibility, incomprehenſibleneſs; or from the moral qualities of man, as goodneſs, juſtice, majeſty; and its very names (31), derived from the phyſical beings which were its types, particularly the ſun, the planets, and the world, preſent to us continually, in ſpite of thoſe who would corrupt and diſguiſe it, infallible marks of its genuine nature.

"Such is the chain of ideas through which

the human mind had already run at a period anterior to the poſitive recitals of hiſtory; and ſince their ſyſtematic form proves them to have been the reſult of one ſcene of ſtudy and inveſtigation, every thing inclines us to place the theatre of inveſtigation, where its primitive elements were generated, in Egypt. There their progreſs was rapid, becauſe the idle curioſity of the theological philoſophers had, in the retirement of the temples, no other food than the enigma of the univerſe, which was ever preſent to their minds; and becauſe, in the political diſſentions which long diſunited that country, each ſtate had its college of prieſts, who, being in turns auxiliaries or rivals, haſtened by their diſputes the progreſs of ſcience and diſcovery (82).

"On the borders of the Nile there happened at that diſtant period, what has ſince been repeated all over the globe. In proportion as each ſyſtem was formed, it excited by its novelty quarrels and ſchiſms: then, gaining credit even by perſecution, it either deſtroyed anterior ideas, or incorporated itſelf with and modified them. But political

inſtitutions

inſtitutions taking place, all opinions, by the aggregation of ſtates and mixture of different people, were at length confounded; and the chain of ideas being loſt, theology, plunged in a chaos, became a mere logogryph of old traditions no longer underſtood. Religion, loſing its object, was now nothing more than a political expedient by which to rule the credulous vulgar; and was embraced either by men credulous themſelves and the dupes of their own viſions, or by bold and energetic ſpirits, who formed vaſt projects of ambition."

SECT. IX. *Religion of Moſes, or worſhip of the ſoul of the world (Jou-piter).*

"OF this latter deſcription was the Hebrew legiſlator, who, deſirous of ſeparating his nation from every other, and of forming a diſtinct and excluſive empire, conceived the deſign of taking for its baſis religious prejudices, and of erecting round it a ſacred rampart of rites and opinions. But in vain did he proſcribe the worſhip of ſymbols, the reigning religion, at that time, in Lower Egypt and Phenicia (83): his God was not

on that account the leſs an Egyptian God, of the invention of thoſe prieſts whoſe diſciple Moſes had been; and *Yahoub* (84), detected by his very name, which means eſſence of beings, and by his ſymbol, the fiery buſh, is nothing more than the ſoul of the world, the principle of motion, which Greece ſhortly after adopted under the ſame denomination in her *You-piter*, generative principle, and under that of *Ei*, exiſtence (85); which the Thebans conſecrated by the name of *Kneph*; which Sais worſhipped under the emblem of *Iſis veiled*, with this inſcription, *I am all that has been, all that is, and all that will be, and no mortal has drawn aſide my veil*; which Pythagoras honoured under the appellation of *Veſta*, and which the Stoic philoſophy defined with preciſion, by calling it the principle of fire. In vain did Moſes wiſh to blot from his religion whatever could bring to remembrance the worſhip of the ſtars; a multiplicity of traits in ſpite of his exertions ſtill remained to point it out: the ſeven lamps of the great candleſtick, the twelve ſtones or ſigns of the Urim of the high-prieſt, the feaſt of the two equinoxes, each of which at that

that epocha formed a year, the ceremony of the lamb or celeſtial ram, then at its fifteenth degree; laſtly, the name of Oſiris even preſerved in his ſong (86), and the ark or coffer, an imitation of the tomb in which that God was incloſed; all theſe remain to bear record to the genealogy of his ideas, and their derivation from the common ſource."

SECT. X. *Religion of Zoroaſter.*

"ZOROASTER was alſo a man of the ſame bold and energetic ſtamp, who, five centuries after Moſes, and in the time of David, revived and moralized among the Medes and Bactrians the whole Egyptian ſyſtem of Oſiris, under the names of Ormuzd and Ahrimanes. He called the reign of ſummer, virtue and good; the reign of winter, ſin and evil; the renovation of nature in ſpring, creation; the revival of the ſpheres in the ſecular periods of the conjunction, reſurrection; and his future life, hell, paradiſe, were the Tartarus and Elyſium of the ancient aſtrologers and geographers; in a word, he only conſecrated the already exiſting reveries of the myſtic ſyſtem."

SECT.

SECT. XI. *Budoiſm, or religion of the Samaneans.*

"IN the ſame rank muſt be included the promulgators of the ſepulchral doctrine of the Samaneans, who, on the baſis of the metempſychoſis, raiſed the miſanthropic ſyſtem of ſelf-renunciation and denial; who, laying it down as a principle, that the body is only a priſon where the ſoul lives in impure confinement; that life is but a dream, an illuſion, and the world a place of paſſage to another country, to a life without end; placed virtue and perfection in abſolute inſenſibility, in the abnegation of phyſical organs, in the annihilation of all being: whence reſulted the faſts, penances, macerations, ſolitude, contemplations, and all the deplorable practices of the mad-headed Anchorets."

SECT. XII. *Braminiſm, or the Indian ſyſtem.*

"FINALLY, of the ſame caſt were the founders of the Indian ſyſtem, who, refining after Zoroaſter upon the two principles of creation and deſtruction, introduced an intermediate one, that of conſervation, and upon their trinity in unity, of Brama, Chiven, and Bichenou,

Bichenou, accumulated a multitude of traditional allegories, and the alembicated ſubtleties of their metaphyſics.

"Theſe are the materials which, ſcattered through Aſia, there exiſted for many ages, when, by a fortuitous courſe of events and circumſtances, new combinations of them were introduced on the banks of the Euphrates, and on the ſhores of the Mediterranean."

SECT. XIII. *Chriſtianity, or the allegorical worſhip of the Sun under the cabaliſtical names of* CHRIS-EN *or* CHRIST, *and* YÊS-US *or* JESUS.

"IN conſtituting a ſeparate people, Moſes had vainly imagined that he ſhould guard them from the influence of every foreign idea: but an invincible inclination, founded on affinity of origin, continually called back the Hebrews to the worſhip of the neighbouring nations; and the relations of commerce that neceſſarily ſubſiſted between them, tended every day to ſtrengthen the propenſity. While the Moſaic inſtitution maintained its ground, the coercion of government and the laws, was a conſiderable obſtacle to the inlet

of

of innovations; yet even then the principal places were full of idols, and God the ſun had his chariot and horſes painted in the palaces of kings, and in the very temple of Yahouh: but when the conqueſts of the kings of Nineveh and Babylon had diſſolved the bands of public power, the people left to themſelves, and ſolicited by their conquerors, no longer kept a reſtraint on their inclinations, and profane opinions were openly profeſſed in Judea. At firſt the Aſſyrian colonies,[1] placed in the ſituation of the old tribes, filled the kingdom of Samaria with the dogmas of the Magi, which ſoon penetrated into Judea. Afterwards Jeruſalem having been ſubjugated, the Egyptians, Syrians and Arabs, entering this open country, introduced their tenets, and the religion of Moſes thus underwent a ſecond alteration. In like manner the prieſts and great men, removing to Babylon, and educated in the ſcience of the Chaldeans, imbibed, during a reſidence of ſeventy years, every principle of their theology, and from that moment the dogmas of the evil Genius (Satan), of the archangel Michael (87), of the Ancient of

Days (Ormuzd), of the rebellious angels, the celeſtial combats, the immortality of the ſoul, and the reſurrection, dogmas unknown to Moſes, or rejected by him, ſince he obſerves a perfect ſilence reſpecting them, became naturalized among the Jews.

"On their return to their country, the emigrants brought back with them theſe ideas; and at firſt the innovations occaſioned diſputes between their partiſans, the Phariſees, and the adherents to the ancient national worſhip, the Sadducees: but the former, ſeconded by the inclination of the people, and the habits they had already contracted, and ſupported by the authority of the Perſians, their deliverers, finally gained the aſcendancy, and the theology of Zoroaſter was conſecrated by the children of Moſes (88).

"A fortuitous analogy between two leading ideas, proved particularly favourable to this coalition, and formed the baſis of a laſt ſyſtem, not leſs ſurpriſing in its fortune than in the cauſes of its formation.

"From the time that the Aſſyrians had deſtroyed the kingdom of Samaria, ſome

ſagacious

ſagacious ſpirits foreſaw, announced, and predicted the ſame fate to Jeruſalem: and all their predictions were ſtamped by this particularity, that they always concluded with prayers for a happy re-eſtabliſhment and regeneration, which were in like manner ſpoken of in the way of prophecies. The enthuſiaſm of the Hierophants had figured a royal deliverer, who was to re-eſtabliſh the nation in its ancient glory: the Hebrews were again to become a powerful and conquering people, and Jeruſalem the capital of an empire that was to extend over the whole world.

"Events having realized the firſt part of thoſe predictions, the ruin of Jeruſalem, the people clung to the ſecond with a firmneſs of belief proportioned to their misfortunes; and the afflicted Jews waited with the impatience of want and of deſire, for that victorious king and deliverer that was to come, in order to ſave the nation of Moſes, and reſtore the throne of David.

"The ſacred and mythological traditions of precedent times had ſpread over all Aſia a tenet perfectly analogous. A great mediator, a final judge, a future ſaviour, was ſpoken of, who,

who, as king, God, and victorious legiſlator, was to reſtore the golden age upon earth (89), to deliver the world from evil, and regain for mankind the reign of good, the kingdom of peace and happineſs. Theſe ideas and expreſſions were in every mouth, and they conſoled the people under that deplorable ſtate of real ſuffering into which they had been plunged by ſucceſſive conqueſts and conquerors, and the barbarous deſpotiſm of their governments. This reſemblance between the oracles of different nations and the predictions of the prophets, excited the attention of the Jews; and the prophets had doubtleſs been careful to infuſe into their pictures, the ſpirit and ſtyle of the ſacred books employed in the Pagan myſteries. The arrival of a great ambaſſador, of a final ſaviour, was therefore the general expectation in Judea, when at length a ſingular circumſtance was made to determine the preciſe period of his coming.

"It was recorded in the ſacred books of the Perſians and the Chaldeans, that the world, compoſed of a total revolution of twelve thouſand periods, was divided into

two partial revolutions, of which one, the age and reign of good, was to terminate at the expiration of ſix thouſand, and the other, the age and reign of evil, at the expiration of another ſix thouſand.

" Their firſt authors had meant by theſe recitals, the annual revolution of the great celeſtial orb (a revolution compoſed of twelve months or ſigns each divided into a thouſand parts), and the two ſyſtematic periods of winter and ſummer, each conſiſting equally of ſix thouſand. But theſe equivocal expreſſions having been erroneouſly explained, inſtead of their aſtrological and phyſical ſenſe, the reſult was, that the annual was taken for a ſecular world, the thouſand periods for a thouſand years; and judging, from the appearance of things, that the preſent was the age of misfortune, they inferred that it would terminate at the expiration of the ſix thouſand pretended years (90).

" Now, according to the Jewiſh computation, ſix thouſand years had already nearly elapſed ſince the ſuppoſed creation of the world (91). This coincidence produced conſiderable

conſiderable fermentation in the minds of the people. Nothing was thought of but the approaching termination. The Hierophants were interrogated, and their ſacred books examined. The great Mediator and final Judge was expected, and his advent deſired, that an end may be put to ſo many calamities. This was ſo much the ſubject of converſation, that ſome one was ſaid to have ſeen him, and a rumour of this kind was all that was wanting to eſtabliſh a general certainty. The popular report became a demonſtrated fact; the imaginary being was realized; and all the circumſtances of mythological tradition being in ſome manner connected with this phantom, the reſult was an authentic and regular hiſtory, which from henceforth it was blaſphemy to doubt.

"In this mythological hiſtory the following traditions were recorded: "That, *in the "beginning, a man and a woman had, by their "fall, brought ſin and evil into the world.*" (Examine plate II.)

"By this was denoted the aſtronomical fact of the celeſtial Virgin, and the herdſman (Bootes) who, ſetting heliacally at the au-

tumnal equinox, reſigned the heavens to the wintry conſtellations, and ſeemed, in ſinking below the horizon, to introduce into the world the genius of evil, Ahrimanes, repreſented by the conſtellation of the Serpent (92.)

" *That the woman had decoyed and ſeduced*
" *the man* (93)."

" And in reality, the Virgin ſetting firſt, appears to draw the Herdſman (Bootes) after her.

" *That the woman had tempted him, by offer-*
" *ing him fruit pleaſant to the ſight and good for*
" *food, which gave the knowledge of good and*
" *evil.*"

" Manifeſtly alluding to the Virgin, who is depicted holding a bunch of fruit in her hand, which ſhe appears to extend towards the Herdſman: in like manner the branch, emblem of autumn, placed in the picture of Mithra (94) on the front of winter and ſummer, ſeems to open the door, and to give the knowledge, the key, of good and evil.

" *That this couple had been driven from the*
" *celeſtial garden, and that a cherub with a*
" *flaming ſword had been placed at the door to*
" *guard it.*"

" And

"And when the Virgin and the Herdſman ſink below the Weſtern horizon, Perſeus riſes on the oppoſite ſide (95), and ſword in hand, this Genius may be ſaid to drive them from the ſummer heaven, the garden and reign of fruits and flowers.

"*That from this virgin would be born,*
"*would ſpring up a ſhoot, a child, that ſhould*
"*cruſh the ſerpent's head, and deliver the world*
"*from ſin.*"

"By this was denoted the Sun, which, at the period of the ſummer ſolſtice, at the preciſe moment that the Perſian Magi drew the horoſcope of the new year, found itſelf in the boſom of the Virgin, and which, on this account, was repreſented in their aſtrological pictures in the form of an infant ſuckled by a chaſte virgin (96), and afterwards became, at the vernal equinox the Ram or Lamb, conqueror of the conſtellation of the Serpent, which diſappeared from the heavens.

"*That in his infancy, this reſtorer of the*
"*divine or celeſtial nature, would lead a mean,*
"*humble, obſcure and indigent life.*"

"By which was meant, that the winter ſun

was humbled, depreſſed below the horizon, and that this firſt period of his four ages, or the ſeaſons, was a period of obſcurity and indigence, of faſting and privation.

" *That being put to death by the wicked, he* " *would glorioufly riſe again, aſcend from hell* " *into heaven, where he would reign for ever.*"

" By theſe expreſſions was deſcribed the life of the ſame Sun, who, terminating his career at the winter ſolſtice, when Typhon and the rebellious angels exerciſed their ſway, ſeemed to be put to death by them; but ſhortly after revived and roſe again (97) in the firmament, where he ſtill remains.

" Theſe traditions went ſtill farther, ſpecifying his aſtrological and myſterious names, maintaining that he was called ſometimes *Chris* or Conſervator (98); and hence the Hindoo God, *Chris-en*, or *Chriſtna*; and the Chriſtian *Chris-tos*, the ſon of Mary. That at other times he was called *Yês*, by the union of three letters, which, according to their numerical value, form the number 608, one of the ſolar periods (99). And behold, O Europeans, the name which, with a Latin termination has become your *Yês-us* or Jeſus; the ancient

ancient and cabaliſtical name given to young Bacchus, the clandeſtine ſon of the virgin Minerva, who in the whole hiſtory of his life, and even in his death, calls to mind the hiſtory of the God of the Chriſtians; that is, the ſtar of day, of which they are both of them emblems."

At theſe words a violent murmur aroſe on the part of the Chriſtian groupes; but the Mahometans, the Lamas and the Hindoos having called them to order, the orator thus concluded his diſcourſe.

"You are not to be told," ſaid he, "in what manner the reſt of this ſyſtem was formed in the chaos and anarchy of the three firſt centuries; how a multiplicity of opinions divided the people, all of which were embraced with equal zeal and retained with equal obſtinacy, becauſe alike founded on ancient tradition, they were alike ſacred. You know how, at the end of three centuries, government having eſpouſed one of theſe ſects, made it the orthodox religion; that is to ſay, the predominant religion, to the excluſion of the reſt, which, on account of their inferiority, were denominated hereſies; how,

and by what means of violence and ſeduction this religion was propagated and gained ſtrength, and afterwards became divided and weakened; how, ſix centuries after the innovation of Chriſtianity, another ſyſtem was formed out of its materials and thoſe of the Jews, and a political and theological empire was created by Mahomet at the expence of that of Moſes and the vicars of Jeſus.

"Now, if you take a retroſpect of the whole hiſtory of the ſpirit of religion, you will find, that in its origin it had no other author than the ſenſations and wants of man: that the idea of God had no other type, no other model, than that of phyſical powers, material exiſtences, operating good or evil, by impreſſions of pleaſure or pain on ſenſible beings. You will find that in the formation of every ſyſtem, this ſpirit of religion purſued the ſame track, and was uniform in its proceedings; that in all, the dogma never failed to repreſent, under the name God, the operations of nature, and the paſſions and prejudices of men; that in all, morality had for its ſole end, deſire of happineſs and averſion to pain; but that the people

ple and the majority of legiſlators, ignorant of the true road that led thereto, invented falſe, and therefore contrary ideas of virtue and vice, of good and evil; that is, of what renders man happy or miſerable. You will find, that in all, the means and cauſes of propagation and eſtabliſhment exhibited the ſame ſcenes, the ſame paſſions, and the ſame events, continual diſputes about words, falſe pretexts for inordinate zeal, for revolutions, for wars, lighted up by the ambition of chiefs, by the chicanery of promulgators, by the credulity of proſelytes, by the ignorance of the vulgar, and by the graſping cupidity and the intolerant pride of all. In ſhort, you will find that the whole hiſtory of the ſpirit of religion, is merely that of the fallibility and uncertainty of the human mind, which, placed in a world that it does not comprehend, is yet deſirous of ſolving the enigma; and which, the aſtoniſhed ſpectator of this myſterious and viſible prodigy, invents cauſes, ſuppoſes ends, builds ſyſtems; then, finding one defective, abandons it for another not leſs vicious; hates the error that it has renounced, is ignorant of the new one

that it adopts; rejects the truth of which it is in purſuit, invents chimeras of hetero-genious and contradictory beings, and, ever dreaming of wiſdom and happineſs, loſes itſelf in a labyrinth of torments and illu-ſions."

CHAP.

CHAP. XXIII.

END OF ALL RELIGIONS THE SAME.

THUS ſpoke the orator, in the name of thoſe who had made the origin and genealogy of religious ideas their peculiar ſtudy.

The theologians of the different ſyſtems now expreſſed their opinions of this diſcourſe. "It is an impious repreſentation," ſaid ſome, "which aims at nothing leſs than the ſub-"verſion of all belief, the introducing in-"ſubordination into the minds of men, and "annihilating our power and miniſtry."—"It is a romance," ſaid others, "a tiſſue of "conjectures, fabricated with art, but deſti-"tute of foundation."—The moderate and prudent ſaid, "Suppoſing all this to be true, "where is the uſe of revealing theſe myſte-"ries? Our opinions are doubtleſs pervaded "with errors, but thoſe errors are a neceſ-"ſary curb on the multitude. The world "has gone on thus for two thouſand years; "why ſhould we now alter its courſe?"

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The murmur of diſapprobation, which never fails to ariſe againſt every kind of innovation, already began to increaſe, when a numerous groupe of plebeians and untaught men of every country and nation, without prophets, without doctors without religious worſhip, advancing in the ſand, attracted the attention of the whole aſſembly; and one of them, addreſſing himſelf to the legiſlators, ſpoke as follows.

"Mediators and umpires of nations! The ſtrange recitals that have been made during the whole of the preſent debate, we never till this day heard of; and our underſtanding, aſtoniſhed and bewildered at ſuch a multitude of doctrines, ſome of them learned, others abſurd, and all unintelligible, remains in doubt and uncertainty. One reflection however has ſtruck us: in reviewing ſo many prodigious facts, ſo many contradictory aſſertions, we could not avoid aſking ourſelves, Of what importance to us are all theſe diſcuſſions? Where is the neceſſity of our knowing what happened five or ſix thouſand years ago, in countries of which we are ignorant, among men who will ever be unknown

known to us? True or falſe, of what importance is it to us to know whether the world has exiſted ſix thouſand years or twenty thouſand; whether it was made of ſomething or of nothing; of itſelf, or by an artificer, equally in his turn requiring an author? What! uncertain as we are of what is paſſing around us, ſhall we pretend to aſcertain what is tranſacting in the ſun, the moon, and imaginary ſpaces? Having forgotten our own infancy, ſhall we pretend to know the infancy of the world? Who can atteſt what he has never ſeen? Who can certify the truth of what no one comprehends?

"Beſide, what will it avail as to our exiſtence, whether we believe or reject theſe chimeras? Hitherto neither our fathers nor ourſelves have had any idea of them, and yet we do not perceive that on that account we have experienced more or leſs ſun, more or leſs ſubſiſtence, more or leſs good or evil.

"If the knowledge of theſe things be neceſſary, how is it that we have lived as happily without it as thoſe whom it has ſo much diſquieted? If it be ſuperfluous, why ſhould we now take upon ourſelves the burthen?"

—Thea

—Then addreſſing himſelf to the doctors and theologians: "How can it be required of us, poor and ignorant as we are, whoſe every moment is ſcarcely adequate to the cares of our ſubſiſtence and the labours of which you reap the profit; how can it be required of us to be verſed in the numerous hiſtories you have related, to read the variety of books which you have quoted, and to learn the different languages in which they are written? If our lives were protracted to a thouſand years, ſcarcely would it be ſufficient for this purpoſe."

"It is not neceſſary," ſaid the doctors, "that you ſhould acquire all this ſcience: we poſſeſs it in your ſtead."

"Meanwhile," replied theſe children of ſimplicity, "with all your ſcience, do you agree among yourſelves? What then is its utility? Beſides, how can you anſwer for us? If the faith of one man may be the ſubſtitute of the faith of many, what need was there that you ſhould believe? Your fathers might believe for you; and that would have been the more reaſonable, ſince they were the eye-witneſſes upon whoſe credit you depend.

Laſtly,

Laſtly, what is this circumſtance which you call belief if it has no practical tendency? And what practical tendency can you diſcover in this queſtion, whether the world be eternal or no?"

"To believe wrong reſpecting it would be offenſive to God," ſaid the doctors.

"How do you know that?" cried the children of ſimplicity?

"From our ſcriptures," replied the doctors.

"We do not underſtand them," rejoined the ſimple men.

"We underſtand them for you," ſaid the doctors.

"There lies the difficulty," reſumed the ſimple men. "By what right have you appointed yourſelves mediators between God and us?"

"By the command of God," ſaid the doctors.

"Give us the proof of that command," ſaid the ſimple men.

"It is in our ſcriptures," ſaid the doctors.

"We do not underſtand them," anſwered the ſimple men; nor can we underſtand how a juſt God can place you over our heads. Why does our common Father require us to believe the

the ſame propoſitions with a leſs degree of evidence? He has ſpoken to you; be it ſo: he is infallible, he cannot deceive you. But we are ſpoken to by you; and who will aſſure us that you are not deceived, or that you are incapable of deceiving? If we are miſtaken, how can it conſiſt with the juſtice of God, to condemn us for the neglect of a rule with which we were never acquainted?"

"He has given you the law of nature," ſaid the doctors.

"What is the law of nature?" ſaid the ſimple men. "If this law be ſufficient, why does he give us another? If it be inſufficient, why did he give us that?"

"The judgments of God," replied the doctors, "are myſterious; his juſtice is not reſtrained by the rules of human juſtice."

"If juſtice with him and with us," ſaid the ſimple men, "mean a different thing, what criterion can we have to judge of his juſtice? And once more, to what purpoſe all theſe laws? What end does he propoſe by them?"

"To render you more happy," replied a doctor, "by rendering you better and more virtuous. God has manifeſted himſelf by

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ſo many oracles and prodigies to teach mankind the proper uſe of his benefits, and to diſſuade them from injuring each other."

"If that be the caſe," ſaid the ſimple men, "the ſtudies and reaſonings you told us of are unneceſſary: we want nothing but to have it clearly made out to us, which is the religion that beſt fulfils the end that all propoſe to themſelves."

Inſtantly, every groupe boaſting of the ſuperior excellence of its morality, there aroſe among the partiſans of the different ſyſtems of worſhip, a new diſpute more violent than any preceding one. "Ours," ſaid the Mahometans, "is the pureſt morality, which teaches every virtue uſeful to men and acceptable to God. We profeſs juſtice, diſintereſtedneſs, reſignation, charity, almſgiving, and devotion. We torment not the ſoul with ſuperſtitious fears; we live free from alarm, and we die without remorſe."

"And have you the preſumption," replied the Chriſtian prieſts, "to talk of morality; you whoſe chief has practiſed licentiouſneſs, and preached doctrines that are a ſcandal to all purity, and the leading principle of whoſe

whoſe religion is homicide and war. For the truth of this we appeal to experience. For twelve centuries paſt your fanaticiſm has never ceaſed to ſpread deſolation and carnage through the nations of the earth; and that Aſia, once ſo flouriſhing, now languiſhes in inſignificance and barbariſm, is aſcribable to your doctrine; to that doctrine, the friend of ignorance, the enemy of all inſtruction, which, on the one hand, conſecrating the moſt abſolute deſpotiſm in him who commands, and on the other, impoſing the moſt blind and paſſive obedience on thoſe who are governed, has benumbed all the faculties of man, and plunged nations in a ſtate of brutality.

"How different is the caſe with our ſublime and celeſtial morality! It is ſhe that drew the earth from its primitive barbarity, from the abſurd and cruel ſuperſtitions of idolatry, from human ſacrifices (100), and the orgies of Pagan myſtery: it is ſhe that has purified the manners of men, proſcribed inceſt and adultery, poliſhed ſavage nations, aboliſhed ſlavery, introduced new and unknown virtues to the world, univerſal charity, the equality of

of mankind in the eyes of God, forgiveneſs and forgetfulneſs of injuries, extinction of the paſſions, contempt of worldly greatneſs, and, in ſhort, taught the neceſſity of a life perfectly holy and ſpiritual."

"We admire," ſaid the Mahometans, "the eaſe with which you can reconcile that evangelical charity and meekneſs of which you ſo much boaſt, with the injuries and outrages that you are continually exerciſing towards your neighbour. When you criminate with ſo little ceremony the morals of the great character revered by us, we have a fair opportunity of retorting upon you in the conduct of him whom you adore: but we diſdain ſuch advantages, and, confining ourſelves to the real object of the queſtion, we maintain, that your goſpel morality is by no means characteriſed by the perfection which you aſcribe to it. It is not true, that it has introduced into the world new and unknown virtues: for example, the equality of mankind in the eyes of God, and the fraternity and benevolence which are the conſequence of this equality, were tenets formerly profeſſed by the ſect of Hermetics and Sama-

neans (101), from whom you have your deſcent. As to forgiveneſs of injuries, it had been taught by the Pagans themſelves; but in the latitude you give to it, it ceaſes to be a virtue, and becomes an immorality and a crime. Your boaſted precept, *to him that ſtrikes thee on thy right cheek turn the other alſo*, is not only contrary to the feelings of man, but a flagrant violation of every principle of juſtice; it emboldens the wicked by impunity, degrades the virtuous by the ſervility to which it ſubjects them; delivers up the world to diſorder and tyranny, and diſſolves the bands of ſociety: ſuch is the true ſpirit of your doctrine. The precepts and parables of your goſpel alſo never repreſent God other than as a deſpot, acting by no rule of equity; than as a partial father, treating a debauched and prodigal ſon with greater favour than his obedient and virtuous children; than as a capricious maſter, giving the ſame wages to him who has wrought but one hour, as to thoſe who have borne the burthen and heat of the day, and preferring the laſt comers to the firſt. In ſhort, your morality throughout is unfriendly to human intercourſe,

intercourſe, a code of miſanthropy, calculated to give men a diſguſt for life and ſociety, and attach them to ſolitude and celibacy.

"With reſpect to the manner in which you have practiſed your boaſted doctrine, we in our turn appeal to the teſtimony of fact, and aſk: Was it your evangelical meekneſs and forbearance which excited thoſe endleſs wars among your ſectaries, thoſe atrocious perſecutions of what you called heretics, thoſe cruſades againſt the Arians, the Manicheans and the Proteſtants; not to mention thoſe which you have committed againſt us, nor the ſacrilegious aſſociations ſtill ſubſiſting among you, formed of men who have ſworn to perpetuate them *? Was it the charity of your goſpel that led you to exterminate whole nations in America, and to deſtroy the empires of Mexico and Peru; that makes you ſtill deſolate Africa, the inhabitants of which you ſell like cattle, notwithſtanding the abolition of ſlavery that you pretend your religion has effected; that makes you ravage

* The oath taken by the Knights of the Order of Malta, is to kill, or make the Mahometans priſoners, for the glory of God.

India whoſe domains you uſurp; in ſhort, is it charity that has prompted you for three centuries paſt to diſturb the peaceable inhabitants of three continents, the moſt prudent of whom, thoſe of Japan and China, have been conſtrained to baniſh you from their country, that they might eſcape your chains and recover their domeſtic tranquillity?"

Here the Bramins, the Rabbins, the Bonzes, the Chamans, the prieſts of the Molucca Iſlands and of the coaſt of Guinea, overwhelming the Chriſtian doctors with reproaches, cried: "Yes, theſe men are robbers and hypocrites, preaching ſimplicity to enveigle confidence; humility, the more eaſy to enſlave; poverty, in order to appropriate all riches to themſelves; they promiſe another world the better to invade this; and, while they preach toleration and charity, they commit to the flames, in the name of God, thoſe who do not worſhip him exactly as they do."

"Lying prieſts," retorted the miſſionaries, "it is you who abuſe the credulity of ignorant nations, that you may bend them to your yoke: your miniſtry is the art of impoſture and deception: you have made religion a

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ſyſtem of avarice and cupidity: you feign to have correſpondence with ſpirits, and the oracles they iſſue are your own wills; you pretend to read the ſtars, and your deſires only are what deſtiny decrees: you make idols ſpeak, and the Gods are the mere inſtruments of your paſſions: you have invented ſacrifices and libations for the ſake of the profit you would thus derive from the milk of the flocks, and the fleſh and fat of victims; and under the cloak of piety you devour the offerings made to Gods who cannot eat, and the ſubſtance of the people, obtained by induſtry and toil."

"And you," replied the Bramins, the Bonzes, and the Chamans, "ſell to the credulous ſurvivor vain prayers for the ſouls of his dead relatives. With your indulgences and abſolutions you have arrogated to yourſelves the power and functions of God himſelf; and making a traffic of his grace, you have put heaven up to auction, and have founded, by your ſyſtem of expiation, a tariff of crimes that has perverted the conſciences of men (102)."

"Add to this," ſaid the Imans, "that with theſe men has originated the moſt inſidious

of all wickedneſs, the abſurd and impious obligation of recounting to them the moſt impenetrable ſecrets of actions, of thoughts, of *velléités*, (confeſſion); by means of which their inſolent curioſity has carried its inquiſition even to the ſacred ſanctuary of the nuptial bed (103), and the inviolable aſylum of the heart."

By thus reproaching each other, the chiefs of the different worſhips revealed all the crimes of their miniſtry, all the hidden vices of their profeſſion, and it appeared that the ſpirit, the ſyſtem of conduct, the actions and manners of prieſts were, among all nations, uniformly the ſame: that, every where they had formed ſecret aſſociations, corporations of individuals, enemies to the reſt of the ſociety (104):—that they had attributed to themſelves certain prerogatives and immunities, in order to be exempt from the burthens which fell upon the other claſſes:—that they ſhared neither the toil of the labourer, nor the perils of the ſoldier, nor the viciſſitudes of the merchant:—that they led a life of celibacy, to avoid domeſtic inconveniences and cares:—that, under the garb of poverty, they

they found the ſecret of becoming rich, and of procuring every enjoyment:—that under the name of mendicants, they collected impoſts more conſiderable than thoſe paid to princes:—that under the appellation of gifts and offerings, they obtained a certain revenue unaccompanied with trouble or expence:—that upon the pretext of ſecluſion and devotion, they lived in indolence and licentiouſneſs:—that they had made alms a virtue, that they might ſubſiſt in comfort upon the labour of other men:—that they had invented the ceremonies of worſhip to attract the reverence of the people, calling themſelves the mediators and interpreters of the Gods, with the ſole view of aſſuming all his power; and that for this purpoſe, according to the knowledge or ignorance of thoſe upon whom they had to work, they had made themſelves, by turns, aſtrologers, caſters of planets, augurers, magicians (106), necromancers, quacks, courtiers, confeſſors of princes, always aiming at influence for their own excluſive advantage:—that ſometimes they had exalted the prerogative of kings, and

held their perſons to be ſacred, to obtain their favour or participate in their power:—that at others they had decried this doctrine and preached the murder of tyrants (reſerving it to themſelves to ſpecify the tyranny), in order to be revenged of the ſlights and diſobedience they had experienced from them:—that at all times they had called by the name of impiety what proved injurious to their intereſt; had oppoſed public inſtruction, that they might monopolize ſcience; and, in ſhort, had univerſally found the ſecret of living in tranquillity amidſt the anarchy they occaſioned; ſecure, under the deſpotiſm they ſanctioned; in indolence, amidſt the induſtry they recommended; and in abundance, in the very boſom of ſcarcity; and all this, by carrying on the ſingular commerce of ſelling words and geſtures to the credulous, who paid for them as for commodities of the greateſt value (107).

Then the people, ſeized with fury, were upon the point of tearing to pieces the men who had deceived them; but the legiſlators, arreſting this ſally of violence, and addreſſing the chiefs and doctors, ſaid: "And is it thus, O in-

O inſtitutors of the people, that you have miſled and abuſed them?"

And the terrified prieſts replied: "O legiſlators, we are men, and the people are ſo ſuperſtitious! their weakneſs excited us to take advantage of it*."

And the kings ſaid: "O legiſlators, the people are ſo ſervile and ſo ignorant! they have proſtrated themſelves before the yoke which we ſcarcely had the boldneſs to ſhow to them †."

Then the legiſlators, turning towards the people, ſaid to them: "Remember what you have juſt heard; it contains two important truths. Yes, it is yourſelves that cauſe the evils of which you complain; it is you that encourage tyrants by a baſe flattery of their power, by an abſurd admiration of their pretended beneficence, by converting obedience into ſervility, and liberty into licentiouſneſs, and receiving every impoſition with credulity.

* Conſider in this view the Brabanters.

† The inhabitants of Vienna, for example, who harneſſed themſelves like cattle, and drew the chariot of Leopold.

Can you think of punishing upon them the errors of your own ignorance and selfishness?"

And the people, smitten with confusion, remained in a melancholy silence.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXIV.

SOLUTION OF THE PROBLEM OF CONTRADICTIONS.

THE legiſlators then reſumed their addreſs. "O nations!" ſaid they, "we have heard the diſcuſſion of your opinions; and the diſcord that divides you has ſuggeſted to us various reflections, which we beg leave to propoſe to you as queſtions which it is neceſſary you ſhould ſolve.

"Conſidering, in the firſt place, the numerous and contradictory creeds you have adopted, we would aſk on what motives your perſuaſion is founded? Is it from deliberate choice that you have enliſted under the banners of one prophet rather than under thoſe of another? Before you adopted this doctrine in preference to that, did you firſt compare, did you maturely examine them? Or has not your belief been rather the chance reſult of birth, and of the empire of education and habit? Are you not

not born Chriſtians on the banks of the Tiber, Mahometans on thoſe of the Euphrates, Idolaters on the ſhores of India, in the ſame manner as you are born fair in cold and temperate regions, and of a ſable complexion under the African ſun! And if your opinions are the effect of your poſition on the globe, of parentage, of imitation, are ſuch fortuitous circumſtances to be regarded as grounds of conviction and arguments of truth?

"In the ſecond place, when we reflect on the proſcriptive ſpirit and the arbitrary intolerance of your mutual claims, we are terrified at the conſequences that flow from your principles. Nations! who reciprocally doom each other to the thunder-bolts of celeſtial wrath, ſuppoſe the univerſal Being, whom you revere, were at this moment to deſcend from heaven among this crowd of people, and, clothed in all his power, were to ſit upon this throne to judge you: ſuppoſe him to ſay—"Mortals! I conſent to adopt "your own principles of juſtice into my "adminiſtration. Of all the different reli-"gions you profeſs, a ſingle religion ſhall

"now

" now be preferred to the reſt; all the others, " this vaſt multitude of ſtandards, of nations, " of prophets, ſhall be condemned to ever- " laſting deſtruction. Nor is this enough; " among the different ſects of the choſen " religion one only ſhall experience my fa- " vour, and the reſt be condemned. I will " go farther than this: of this ſingle ſect of " this one religion, I will reject all the in- " dividuals whoſe conduct has not corre- " ſponded to their ſpeculative precepts. O " man! few indeed will then be the number " of the elect you aſſign me! Penurious " hereafter will be the ſtream of beneficence " which will ſucceed to my unbounded " mercy? Rare and ſolitary will be the " catalogue of admirers that you henceforth " deſtine to my greatneſs and my glory."

And the legiſlators ariſing ſaid: " It is enough; you have pronounced your will. Ye nations, behold the urn in which your names ſhall be placed; one ſingle name ſhall be drawn from the multitude; approach and conclude this terrible lottery."—But the people, ſeized with terror, cried: " No, no; we are brethren and equals, we cannot conſent

to condemn each other."—Then the legiſlators, having reſumed their ſeats, continued: "O men! who diſpute upon ſo many ſubjects, lend an attentive ear to a problem we ſubmit to you, and decide it in the exerciſe of your own judgments."—The people accordingly lent the ſtricteſt attention; and the legiſlators lifting one hand towards heaven, and pointing to the ſun, ſaid: "O nations, is the form of this ſun which enlightens you triangular or ſquare?"—And they replied with one voice, "It is neither, it is round."

Then taking the golden balance that was upon the altar, "This metal," aſked the legiſlators, "which you handle every day, is a maſs of it heavier than another maſs of equal dimenſions of braſs?"—"Yes," the people again unanimouſly replied; "gold is heavier then braſs."

The legiſlators then took the ſword. "Is this iron leſs hard than lead?"—"No," ſaid the nations.

"Is ſugar ſweet and gall bitter?"—"Yes."

"Do you love pleaſure, and hate pain?"—"Yes."

"Reſpecting theſe objects and a multi-

plicity of others of a ſimilar nature, you have then but one opinion. Now tell us, is there an abyſs in the centre of the earth, and are there inhabitants in the moon?"

At this queſtion, a general noiſe was heard, and every nation gave a different anſwer. Some replied in the affirmative, others in the negative; ſome ſaid it was probable, others that it was an idle and ridiculous queſtion, and others that it was a ſubject worthy of enquiry; in ſhort, there prevailed among them a total diſagreement.

After a ſhort interval, the legiſlators having reſtored ſilence: "Nations," ſaid they, "how is this to be accounted for? We propoſed to you certain queſtions, and you were all of one opinion without diſtinction of race or ſect: fair or black, diſciples of Mahomet or of Moſes, worſhippers of Bedou or of Jeſus, you all gave the ſame anſwer. We now propoſe another queſtion, and you all differ! whence this unanimity in one caſe, and this diſcordance in the other."

And the groupe of ſimple and untaught men replied: "The reaſon is obvious. Reſpecting the firſt queſtions, we ſee and feel the

the objects; we ſpeak of them from ſenſation: reſpecting the ſecond, they are above the reach of our ſenſes, and we have no guide but conjecture."

"You have ſolved the problem," ſaid the legiſlators; "and the following truth is thus by your own confeſſion eſtabliſhed: Whenever objects are preſent and can be judged of by your ſenſes, you invariably agree in opinion; and you differ in ſentiment only when they are abſent, and out of your reach.

"From this truth flows another equally clear and deſerving of notice. Since you agree reſpecting what you with certainty know, it follows, that when you diſagree, it is becauſe you do not know, do not underſtand, are not ſure of the object in queſtion: or in other words, that you diſpute, quarrel and fight among yourſelves, for what is uncertain, for that of which you doubt. But is this wiſe; is this the part of rational and intelligent beings?

"And is it not evident, that it is not truth for which you contend; that it is not her cauſe you are jealous of maintaining, but the cauſe of your own paſſions and prejudices; that

that it is not the object as it really exiſts that you wiſh to verify, but the object as it appears to you; that it is not the evidence of the thing that you are anxious ſhould prevail, but your perſonal opinion, your mode of ſeeing and judging? There is a power that you want to exerciſe, an intereſt that you want to maintain, a prerogative that you want to aſſume; in ſhort, the whole is a ſtruggle of vanity. And as every individual, when he compares himſelf with every other, finds himſelf to be his equal and fellow, he reſiſts by a ſimilar feeling of right; and from this right which you all deny to each other, and from the inherent conſciouſneſs of your equality, ſpring your diſputes, your combats and your intolerance.

"Now, the only way of reſtoring unanimity is by returning to nature, and taking the order of things which ſhe has eſtabliſhed for your director and guide; and this farther truth will then appear from your uniformity of ſentiment:

"That real objects have in themſelves an identical, conſtant, and invariable mode of exiſtence, and that in your organs exiſts a

ſimilar mode of being affected and impreſſed by them.

"But at the ſame time, inaſmuch as theſe organs are liable to the direction of your will, you may receive different impreſſions, and find yourſelves under different relations towards the ſame objects; ſo that you are with reſpect to them, as it were a ſort of mirror, capable of reflecting them ſuch as they are, and capable of diſfiguring and miſrepreſenting them.

"As often as you perceive the objects, ſuch as they are, your feelings are in accord with the objects, and you agree in opinion; and it is this accord that conſtitutes truth.

"On the contrary, as often as you differ in opinion, your diſſentions prove that you do not ſee the objects ſuch as they are, but vary them.

"Whence it appears, that the cauſe of your diſſentions is not in the objects themſelves, but in your minds, in the manner in which you perceive and judge.

"If therefore we would arrive at uniformity of opinion, we muſt previouſly eſtabliſh certainty, and verify the reſemblance

blance which our ideas have to their models. Now this cannot be obtained, except ſo far as the objects of our enquiry can be referred to the teſtimony and ſubjected to the examination of our ſenſes. Whatever cannot be brought to this trial is beyond the limits of our underſtanding; we have neither rule to try it by, nor meaſure by which to inſtitute a compariſon, nor ſource of demonſtration and knowledge concerning it.

" Whence it is obvious, that, in order to live in peace and harmony, we muſt conſent not to pronounce upon ſuch objects, nor annex to them importance; we muſt draw a line of demarcation between ſuch as can be verified and ſuch as cannot, and ſeparate by an inviolable barrier, the world of fantaſtic beings from the world of realities: that is to ſay, all civil effect muſt be taken away from theological and religious opinions.

" This, O nations, is the end that a great people, freed from their fetters and prejudices, have propoſed to themſelves; this is the work in which, by their command, and under their immediate auſpices, we were engaged,

when your kings and your prieſts came to interrupt our labours..... Kings and prieſts, you may yet for a while ſuſpend the ſolemn publication of the laws of nature; but it is no longer in your power to annihilate or to ſubvert them."

A loud cry was then heard from every quarter of the general aſſembly of nations; and the whole of the people, unanimouſly teſtifying their adherence to the ſentiments of the legiſlators, encouraged them to reſume their ſacred and ſublime undertaking. "Inveſtigate," ſaid they, "the laws which nature, for our direction, has implanted in our breaſts, and form from thence an authentic and immutable code. Nor let this code be calculated for one family, or one nation only, but for the whole without exception. Be the legiſlators of the human race, as ye are the interpreters of their common nature. Shew us the line that ſeparates the world of chimeras, from that of realities; and teach us, after ſo many religions of error and deluſion, the religion of evidence and truth."

Upon this, the legiſlators reſuming their enquiry into the phyſical and conſtituent attributes

attributes of man, and the motives and affections which govern him in his individual and ſocial capacity, unfolded in the following terms the laws on which Nature herſelf has founded his felicity.

ENE OF THE FIRST PART.

Ἱστορία Σουλίου καὶ Παργας.
περιέχουσα τὴν χρονολογίαν
καὶ τοὺς αὐτῶν πολέμους μετὰ
τοῦ Ἀλῆ Πασία.

NOTES.

PAGE 1. (*). *Eleventh year of Abd-ul-Hâmid.* That is, 1784 of the Chriſtian æra, and 1198 of the Hegira. The emigration of the Tartars took place in March, immediately on the manifeſto of the empreſs declaring the Crimea to be incorporated with Ruſſia. . . . *A Muſſulman prince of the name of Gengis Khan.* It was Châhin Guerai. Gengis Khan was borne and ſerved by the kings whom he conquered: Châhin, on the contrary, after ſelling his country for a penſion of eighty thouſand roubles, accepted the commiſſion of captain of guards to Catherine II. He afterwards returned home, and, according to cuſtom, was ſtrangled by the Turks.

Page 7. (*a*). *The precious thread of Serica.* That is the ſilk originally derived from the mountainous country where the *great wall* terminates, and which appears to have been the cradle of the Chineſe empire. . . . The *tiſſues of Caſſimere.* The ſhawls which Ezekiel ſeems to have deſcribed under the appellation of Choud-choud. . . . *The gold of Ophir.* This country, which was one of the twelve Arab

cantons, and which has ſo much and ſo unſucceſsfully been ſought for by the antiquaries, has left however ſome trace of itſelf in Ofor, in the province of Oman, upon the Perſian Gulph, neighbouring on one ſide to the Sabeans, who are celebrated by Strabo for their plenty of gold, and on the other to Aula or Hevila where the pearl fiſhery was carried on. See the 27th chapter of Ezekiel, which gives a very curious and extenſive picture of the commerce of Aſia at that period.

Page 8. (*b*). *This Syria contained a hundred flouriſhing cities.* According to Joſephus and Strabo, there were in Syria twelve millions of ſouls; and the traces that remain of culture and habitation confirm the calculation.

Page 13. (*c*). *A blind fatality.* This is the univerſal and rooted prejudice of the Eaſt. "It was written," is there the anſwer to every thing. Hence reſult an unconcern and apathy, the moſt powerful impediments to inſtruction and civilization.

Page 21. (*d*). *The too famous peninſula of India.* Of what real good has been the commerce of India to the maſs of the people? On the contrary, how great the evil occaſioned by the ſuperſtition of this country having been added to the general ſuperſtition?

Page 29. (*e*). *Ancient kingdom of Ethiopia.* In the next volume of the Encyclopedia will appear a memoir reſpecting the chronology of the twelve ages anterior to the paſſing of Xerxes into Greece, in which I conceive myſelf to have proved, that Upper Egypt formerly compoſed a diſtinct kingdom, known to the Hebrews by the name of *Kous*, and to which the appellation of Ethiopia was ſpecially given. This kingdom preſerved its independence to the time of Pſammeticus, at which period, being united

united to the Lower Egypt, it loſt its name of Ethiopia, which thenceforth was beſtowed upon the nations of Nubia, and upon the different hordes of Blacks, including Thebes, their metropolis.

Page *id.* (*f*). *Thebes with its hundred palaces.* The idea of a city with a hundred gates, in the common acceptation of the word, is ſo abſurd, that I am aſtoniſhed the equivoque has not before been felt.

It has ever been the cuſtom of the Eaſt to call palaces and houſes of the great by the name of gates, becauſe the principal luxury of theſe buildings conſiſts in the ſingular gate leading from the ſtreet into the court, at the fartheſt extremity of which the palace is ſituated. It is under the veſtibule of this gate that converſation is held with paſſengers, and a ſort of audience and hoſpitality given. All this was doubtleſs known to Homer; but poets make no commentaries, and readers love the marvellous.

This city of Thebes, now Lougſor, reduced to the condition of a miſerable village, has left aſtoniſhing monuments of its magnificence. Particulars of this may be ſeen in the plates of Norden, in Pocock, and in the recent travels of Bruce. Theſe monuments give credibility to all that Homer has related of its ſplendour, and led us to infer of its political power and external commerce.

Its geographical poſition was favourable to this twofold object. For, on one ſide, the valley of the Nile, ſingularly fertile, muſt have early occaſioned a numerous population; and, on the other, the Red Sea giving communication with Arabia and India, and the Nile with Abyſſinia and the Mediterranean, Thebes was thus naturally allied to the richeſt countries on the globe; an alliance

alliance that procured it an activity so much the greater, as Lower Egypt, at first a swamp, was nearly, if not totally, uninhabited. But when at length this country had been drained by the canals and dikes which Sesostris constructed, population was introduced there, and wars arose which proved fatal to the power of Thebes. Commerce then took another route, and descended to the point of the Red Sea, to the canals of Sesostris (See Strabo) and wealth and activity were transformed to Memphis. This is manifestly what Diodorus means, when he tells us (Lib. I. sect. 2.) that as soon as Memphis was established and made a wholesome and delicious abode, kings abandoned Thebes to fix themselves there. Thus Thebes continued to decline, and Memphis to flourish till the time of Alexander, who, building Alexandria on the border of the sea, caused Memphis to fall in its turn; so that prosperity and power seem to have descended historically step by step along the Nile: whence it results, both physically and historically, that the existence of Thebes was prior to that of the other cities. The testimony of writers is very positive in this respect. "The "Thebans," says Diodorus, "consider themselves as the "most ancient people of the earth, and assert, that with "them originated philosophy and the science of the "stars. Their situation, it is true, is infinitely favourable "to astronomical observation, and they have a more accurate division of time into months and year than other "nations, &c."

What Diodorus says of the Thebans, every author and himself elsewhere, repeat of the Ethiopians, which tends more firmly to establish the identity of place of which I have spoken. "The Ethiopians conceive themselves (says "he,

" he, Lib. III.) to be of greater antiquity than any other " nation: and it is probable that, born under the sun's path, " its warmth may have ripened them earlier than other " men. They suppose themselves also to be the inventors " of divine worship, of festivals, of solemn assemblies, " of sacrifices, and every other religious practice. They " affirm that the Egyptians are one of their colonies, and " that the Delta, which was formerly sea, became land " by the conglomeration of the earth of the higher " country, which was washed down by the Nile. They " have, like the Egyptians, two species of letters, hiero- " glyphics and the alphabet; but among the Egyptians " the first was known only to the priests, and by them " transmitted from father to son, whereas both species " are common among the Ethiopians."

" The Ethiopians," says Lucian, page 985, " were the " first who invented the science of the stars, and gave " names to the planets, not at random and without mean- " ing, but descriptive of the qualities which they con- " ceived them to possess; and it was from them that " this art passed, still in an imperfect state, to the Egyp- " tians."

It would be easy to multiply citations upon this subject; from all which it follows, that we have the strongest reason to believe that the country neighbouring to the tropic, was the cradle of the sciences, and of consequence that the first learned nation was a nation of Blacks; for it is incontrovertible, that by the term Ethiopians, the ancients meant to represent a people of black complexion, thick lips, and woolly hair. I am therefore inclined to believe, that the inhabitants of Lower Egypt were originally a foreign colony imported from Syria and Arabia, a medley

medley of different tribes of Savages, originally ſhepherds and fiſhermen, who by degrees formed themſelves into a nation, and who, by nature and deſcent, were enemies of the Thebans, by whom they were no doubt deſpiſed and treated as barbarians.

I have ſuggeſted the ſame ideas in my Travels into Syria, founded upon the black complexion of the Sphinx. I have ſince aſcertained, that the antique images of Thebais have the ſame characteriſtic; and Mr. Bruce has offered a multitude of analogous facts: but this traveller, of whom I heard ſome mention at Cairo, has ſo interwoven theſe facts with certain ſyſtematic opinions, that we ſhould have recourſe to his narratives with caution.

It is ſingular that Africa, ſituated ſo near us, ſhould be the country on earth which is the leaſt known. The Engliſh are at this moment making attempts, the ſucceſs of which ought to excite our emulation.

Page 30. (*g*). *Here were the ports of the Idumeans*, Ailah (Eloth), and Aſiom-Gaber (Heſion-Geber). The name of the firſt of theſe towns ſtill ſubſiſts in its ruins, at the point of the gulph of the Red Sea, and in the route which the pilgrims take to Mecca. Heſion has at preſent no trace, any more than Qolzoum and Faran: it was, however, the harbour for the fleets of Solomon. The veſſels of this prince, conducted by the Tyrians, ſailed along the coaſt of Arabia to Ophir in the Perſian Gulph, thus opening a communication with the merchants of India and Ceylon. That this navigation was entirely of Tyrian invention, appears both from the pilots and ſhipbuilders employed by the Jews, and the names that were given to the trading iſlands, viz. Tyrus

and Aradus, now Barhain. The voyage was performed in two different modes, either in canoes of ofier and ruſhes, covered on the outſide with ſkins done over with pitch: theſe veſſels were unable to quit the Red Sea, or ſo much as to leave the ſhore. The ſecond mode of carrying on the trade was by means of veſſels with decks of the ſize of our long boats, which were able to paſs the ſtrait and to weather the dangers of the ocean: but for this purpoſe it was neceſſary to bring the wood from Mount Lebanus and Cilicia, where it is very fine and in great abundance. This wood was firſt conveyed in floats from Tarſus to Phenicia, for which reaſon the veſſels were called ſhips of Tarſus; from whence it has been ridiculouſly inferred, that they went round the promontary of Africa as far as Tortoſa in Spain. From Phenicia it was tranſported on the backs of camels to the Red Sea, which practice ſtill continues, becauſe the ſhores of this ſea are abſolutely unprovided with wood even for fuel. Theſe veſſels ſpent a complete year in their voyage, that is, ſailed one year, ſojourned another, and did not return till the third. This tediouſneſs was owing, firſt to their cruizing from port to port, as they do at preſent; ſecondly, to their being detained by the Monſoon currents; and thirdly, becauſe, according to the calculations of Pliny and Strabo, it was the ordinary practice among the ancients to ſpend three years in a voyage of twelve hundred leagues. Such a commerce muſt have been very expenſive, particularly as they were obliged to carry with them their proviſions and even freſh water. For this reaſon Solomon made himſelf maſter of Palmyra, which was at that time inhabited, and was already the magazine and high road of merchants by the way of the Euphrates.

This

This conqueſt brought Solomon much nearer to the country of gold and pearls. This alternative of a route either by the Red Sea or by the river Euphrates was to the ancients, what in later times has been the alternative in a voyage to the Indies, either by croſſing the Iſthmus of Suez or doubling the Cape of Good Hope. It appears that till the time of Moſes this trade was carried on acroſs the deſert of Syria and Theais; that afterwards it fell into the hands of the Phenicians, who fixed its ſite upon the Red Sea, and that it was mutual jealouſy that induced the kings of Nineveh and Babylon to undertake the deſtruction of Tyre and Jeruſalem. I inſiſt the more upon theſe facts, becauſe I have never ſeen any thing reaſonable upon the ſubject.

Page 31. (*b*). *Babylon, the ruins of which are trodden under foot of men.* It appears that Babylon occupied on the Eaſtern Bank of the Euphrates a ſpace of ground ſix leagues in length. Throughout this ſpace bricks are found, by means of which daily additions are made to the town of Hellé. Upon many of theſe are characters written with a nail ſimilar to thoſe of Perſepolis. I am indebted for theſe facts to M. de Beauchamp, grand vicar of Babylon, a traveller equally diſtinguiſhed for his knowledge of aſtronomy and his veracity.

Page 59. (*i*). *Thoſe wells of Tyre.* See reſpecting theſe monuments my Travels into Syria, vol. ii. p. 214.

Theſe artificial banks of the Euphrates. From the town or village of Samaouât the courſe of the Euphrates is accompanied with a double bank, which deſcends as far as its junction with the Tygris, and from thence to the ſea, being a length of about a hundred leagues French meaſure. The height of theſe artificial banks is not uniform,

form, but increaſes as you advance from the ſea; it may be eſtimated at from twelve to fifteen feet. But for them, the inundation of the river would bury the country around, which is flat, to an extent of twenty or twenty-five leagues; and even, notwithſtanding theſe banks, there has been in modern times an overflow which has covered the whole triangle formed by the junction of this river to the Tigris, being a ſpace of country of 130 ſquare leagues. By the ſtagnation of theſe waters an epidemical diſeaſe of the moſt fatal nature was occaſioned. It follows from hence, 1. That all the flat country bordering upon theſe rivers was originally a marſh; 2. That this marſh could not have been inhabited previouſly to the conſtruction of the banks in queſtion; 3. That theſe banks could not have been the work but of a population prior as to date: and the elevation of Babylon therefore muſt have been poſterior to that of Nineveh, as I think I have chronologically demonſtrated in the memoir above cited. See Encyclopedie, vol. xiii. of Antiquities.

Page *id.* (*k*). *Theſe conduits of Medea.* The modern Aderbiǒjan, which was a part of Medea, the mountains of Kourdeſtan, and thoſe of Diarbekr, abound with ſubterranean canals, by means of which the ancient inhabitants conveyed water to their parched ſoil in order to fertilize it. It was regarded as a meritorious act, and a religious duty preſcribed by Zoroaſter, who, inſtead of preaching celibacy, mortifications, and other pretended virtues of the Monkiſh ſort, repeats continually in the paſſages that are preſerved reſpecting him in the Sad-der and the Zend-aveſta, "That the action moſt pleaſing to "God is to plough and cultivate the earth, to water it "with running ſtreams, to multiply vegetation and living

" beings, to have numerous flocks, young and fruitful " virgins, a multitude of children, &c. &c."

Page 62. (*l*). *This inequality, the result of accident, was taken for the law of nature.* Almoſt all the ancient philoſophers and politicians have laid it down as a principle, that men are born unequal, that nature has created ſome to be free, and others to be ſlaves. Expreſſions of this kind are to be found in Ariſtotle, and even in Plato, called the divine, doubtleſs in the ſame ſenſe as the mythological reveries which he promulgated. With all the people of antiquity, the Gauls, the Romans, the Athenians, the right of the ſtrongeſt was the right of nations; and from the ſame principle are derived all the political diſorders and public national crimes that at preſent exiſt.

Page *id.* (*m*). *Paternal tyranny laid the foundation of political deſpotiſm.* Upon this ſingle expreſſion it would be eaſy to write a long and important chapter. We might prove in it, beyond contradiction, that all the abuſes of national governments have ſprung from thoſe of domeſtic government, from that government called patriarchal, which ſuperficial minds have extolled without having analyzed it. Numberleſs facts demonſtrate, that with every infant people, in every ſavage and barbarous ſtate, the father, the chief of the family, is a deſpot, and a cruel and inſolent deſpot. The wife is his ſlave, the children his ſervants. This king ſleeps or ſmokes his pipe, while his wife and daughters perform all the drudgery of the houſe, and even that of tillage and cultivation, as far as occupations of this nature are practiſed in ſuch ſocieties; and no ſooner have the boys acquired ſtrength, than they are allowed to beat the females and make

make them ſerve and wait upon them as they do upon their fathers. Similar to this is the ſtate of our own uncivilized peaſants. In proportion as civilization ſpreads, the manners become milder, and the condition of the women improves, till, by a contrary exceſs, they arrive at dominion, and then a nation becomes effeminate and corrupt. It is remarkable, that parental authority is great according as the government is deſpotic. China, India, and Turkey are ſtriking examples of this. One would ſuppoſe that tyrants gave themſelves accomplices, and intereſted ſubaltern deſpots to maintain their authority. In oppoſition to this the Romans will be cited; but it remains to be proved that the Romans were men truly free; and their quick paſſage from their republican deſpotiſm to their abject ſervility under the emperors, gives room at leaſt for conſiderable doubts as to that freedom.

Page 67. (*n*). *Always tending to concenter the power in a ſingle hand.* It is remarkable, that this has in all inſtances been the conſtant progreſs of ſocieties: beginning with a ſtate of anarchy or democracy, that is, with a great diviſion of power, they have paſſed to ariſtocracy, and from ariſtocracy to monarchy. Does it not hence follow, that thoſe who conſtitute ſtates under the democratic form, deſtine them to undergo all the intervening troubles between that and monarchy; and that the ſupreme adminiſtration by a ſingle chief is the moſt natural government, as well as that beſt calculated for peace?

Page 69. (*o*). *And kings followed the dictates of every depraved taſte.* It is equally worthy of remark, that the conduct and manners of princes and kings of every country and every age, are found to be preciſely the ſame at

ſimilar periods, whether of the formation or diſſolution of empires. Hiſtory every where preſents the ſame pictures of luxury and folly; of parks, gardens, lakes, rocks, palaces, furniture, exceſs of the table, wine, women, concluding with brutality.

The abſurd rock in the garden of Verſailles has alone coſt three millions. I have ſometimes calculated what might have been done with the expence of the three pyramids of Gizah, and I have found that it would eaſily have conſtructed, from the Red Sea to Alexandria, a canal 150 feet wide and 30 deep, completely covered in with cut ſtones and a parapet, together with a fortified and commercial town, conſiſting of 400 houſes furniſhed with ciſterns. What difference in point of utility between ſuch a canal and theſe pyramids?

Page 79 (*p*). *By their led horſes, &c.* A Tartar horſeman has always two horſes, of which he leads one in hand....The *Kalpak* is a bonnet made of the ſkin of a ſheep or other animal. The part of the head covered by this bonnet is ſhaved, with the exception of a tuft about the ſize of a crown-piece, and which is ſuffered to grow to the length of ſeven or eight inches, preciſely where our prieſts place their tonſure. It is by this tuft of hair, worn by the majority of Muſſulmans, that the angel of the tomb is to take the elect and carry them into Paradiſe.

Page 80. (*q*). *Infidels are in poſſeſſion of a conſecrated land.* It is not in the power of the ſultan to cede to a foreign power a province inhabited by TRUE BELIEVERS. The people, inſtigated by the lawyers, would not fail to revolt. This is one reaſon which has led thoſe who know

know the Turks, to regard as chimerical the ceding of Candia, Cyprus, and Egypt, projected by certain European potentates.

Page 86. (*r*). *Pronouncing myſteriouſly the word Aûm.* This word is in the religion of the Hindoos a ſacred emblem of the Divinity. It is only to be pronounced in ſecret, without being heard by any one. It is formed of three letters, of which the firſt, *a*, ſignifies the principle of all, the creator, Brama; the ſecond, *u*, the conſervator, Vichenou; and the laſt, *m*, the deſtroyer, who puts an end to all, Chiven. It is pronounced like the monoſyllable ôm, and expreſſes the unity of thoſe three Gods. The idea is preciſely that of the Alpha and Omega mentioned in the New Teſtament.

Page *id.* (*s*). *Whether he ought to begin the ceremony at the elbow, &c.* This is one of the grand points of ſchiſm between the partizans of Omar and thoſe of Ali. Suppoſe two Mahometans to meet on a journey, and to accoſt each other with brotherly affection: the hour of prayer arrives; one begins his ablution at his fingers, the other at the elbow, and inſtantly they are mortal enemies. O ſublime importance of religious opinions! O profound philoſophy of the authors of them!

Page 99. (*t*). *The horde of Oguzians.* Before the Turks took the name of their chief Othman I. they bore that of Oguzians; and it was under this appellation that they were driven out of Tartary by Gengis, and came from the borders of Gihoun to ſettle themſelves in Anatolia.

Page *id.* (*u*). *A general anarchy take place, as happened in the empire of the Sophis.* In Perſia, after the death of Thamas-Koulikan, each province had its chief, and for

forty years theſe chiefs were in a conſtant ſtate of war. In this view the Turks do not ſay without reaſon: "Ten "years of a tyrant are leſs deſtructive than a ſingle night "of anarchy."

Page 107. (*x*). *From people to people barbarous wars were prevalent.* Read the hiſtory of the wars of Rome and Carthage, of Sparta and Meſſina, of Athens and Syracuſe, of the Hebrews and the Phenicians: yet theſe are the nations of which antiquity boaſts as being moſt poliſhed!

Page 114. (*y*). *The deciſion of their diſputes.* What is a people? An individual of the ſociety at large. What a war? A duel between two individual people. In what manner ought a ſociety to act when two of its members fight? Interfere and reconcile, or repreſs them. In the days of the Abbe de Saint-Pierre this was treated as a dream, but happily for the human race it begins to be realized.

Page 119. (*z*). *The Chineſe ſubjected to an inſolent deſpotiſm.* The emperor of China calls himſelf the ſon of heaven, that is, of God; for in the opinion of the Chineſe, the material heaven, the arbiter of fatality, is the Deity himſelf. "The emperor only ſhows himſelf once in ten "months, leſt the people, accuſtomed to ſee him, might "loſe their reſpect; for he holds it as a maxim, that "power can only be ſupported by force, that the people "have no idea of juſtice, and are not to be governed "but by coercion." *Narrative of two Mahometan Travellers in* 851 and 877, tranſlated by the Abbe Renaudot in 1718.

Notwithſtanding what is aſſerted by the miſſionaries, this ſituation has undergone no change. The bamboo ſtill reigns in China, and the ſon of heaven baſtinades, for

for the moſt trivial fault, the Mandarin, who, in his turn, baſtinades the people. The Jeſuits may tell us that this is the beſt governed country in the world, and its inhabitants the happieſt of men: but a ſingle letter from Amyot has convinced me, that China is a truly Turkiſh government, and the account of Sonnerat confirms it. See Vol. II. of *Voyage aux Indes*, in 4to.

The irremediable vice of their language. As long as the Chineſe ſhall in writing make uſe of their preſent characters, they can be expected to make no progreſs in civilization. The neceſſary introductory ſtep muſt be the giving them an alphabet like our own, or the ſubſtituting in the room of their language that of the Tartars: the improvement made in the latter by M. de Lengles, is calculated to introduce this change. See the *Mantchou alphabet*, the production of a mind truly learned in the formation of language.

Page 120. (1.) *In the North I ſee nothing but ſerfs reduced to the level of cattle.* When this was written the revolution in Poland had not taken place. I beg leave to apologiſe to the virtuous nobles and the enlightened prince by whom it was effected.

Page 128. (2.) *And govern yourſelves.* This dialogue between the people and the indolent claſſes, is applicable to every ſociety; it contains the ſeeds of all the political vices and diſorders that prevail, and which may thus be defined; men who do nothing, and who devour the ſubſtance of others; and men who arrogate to themſelves particular rights and excluſive privileges of wealth and indolence. Compare the Mamlouks of Egypt, the nobility of Europe, the Nairs of India, the Emirs of Arabia, the Patricians of Rome, the Chriſtian clergy, the Imans,

the Bramins, the Bonzes, the Lamas, &c. &c. and you will find in all the ſame characteriſtic feature,—"Men "living in idleneſs at the expence of thoſe who labour."

Page 138. (3.) *Equality and liberty conſtitute the phyſical baſis.* In the declaration of rights there is an inverſion of ideas in the firſt article, liberty being placed before equality from which it in reality ſprings. This defect is not to be wondered at; the ſcience of the rights of man is a new ſcience; it was invented yeſterday by the Americans, to-day the French are perfecting it, but there yet remains a great deal to be done. In the ideas that conſtitute it there is a genealogical order which, from its baſis, phyſical equality, to the minuteſt and moſt remote branches of government, ought to proceed in an uninterrupted ſeries of inferences. This will be demonſtrated in the ſecond part of this work.

Page 147. (4.) *A vaſt hat of the leaves of the palm-tree.* This ſpecies of the palm-tree is called *Latanier*. Its leaf, ſimilar to a fan-mount, grows upon a ſtalk iſſuing directly from the earth. A ſpecimen may be ſeen in the botanic garden.

Page 148. (5) *The contemplation of one ſpecies thus infinitely varied.* A hall of coſtumas in one of the galleries of the Louvre, would in every point of view be an intereſting eſtabliſhment: it would furniſh an admirable treat to the curioſity of a great number of men, excellent models to the artiſt, and uſeful ſubjects of meditation to the phyſician, the philoſopher, and the legiſlator. Picture to yourſelf a collection of the various faces and figures of every country and nation, exhibiting accurately colour, features and form: what a field for inveſtigation and enquiry as to the influence of climate, manners, aliment, &c.!

&c.! It might truly be ſtyled the ſcience of man! Buffon has attempted a chapter of this nature, but it only ſerves to exhibit more ſtrikingly our actual ignorance. Such a collection it is ſaid is begun at Peterſburg, but it is ſaid at the ſame time, to be as imperfect as the vocabulary of the 300 languages. The enterprize would be worthy of the French nation.

Page 157. (6). *Thus are there ſects to the number of ſeventy-two.* The Muſſulmans enumerate in common ſeventy-two ſects; but I read, while I reſided among them, a work which gave an account of more than eighty, all equally wiſe and important.

Page *id.* (7). *Has never ceaſed for twelve hundred years.* Read the hiſtory of Iſlamiſm by its own writers, and you will be convinced that one of the principal cauſes of the wars which have deſolated Aſia and Africa ſince the days of Mahomet, has been the apoſtolical fanaticiſm of its doctrine. Cæſar has been ſuppoſed to have deſtroyed three millions of men: it would be intereſting to make a ſimilar calculation reſpecting every founder of a religious ſyſtem.

Page 161. (8). *The Neſtorians, the Eutycheans, and a hundred others.* Conſult upon this ſubject *Dictionnaire des Hereſiés par l'Abbe Pluquet*, in two volumes, 8vo; a work admirably calculated to inſpire the mind with philoſophy, in the ſenſe that the Lacedemonians taught their children temperance, by ſhewing to them the drunken Heliotes.

Page 163. (9). *Diſciples of Zoroaſter.* They are the Parſes, better known by the opprobrious name of Gaures or Guebres, another word for infidels. They are in Aſia

what the Jews are in Europe. The name of their pope or high priest is Mobed.

Page *id.* (10). *Their Destours*; that is to say, their priests. See, respecting the rites of this religion, *Henry Lord, Hyde*, and the *Zendavesta*. Their costuma is a robe with a belt of four knots, and a veil over the mouth for fear of polluting the fire with their breath.

Page 164. (11). *The resurrection of the body, or the soul, or both.* The Zoroastrians are divided between two opinions, one party believing that both soul and body will rise, the other, that it will be the soul only. The Christians and Mahometans have embraced the most solid of the two.

Page 105. (12). *They wear a net over their mouths, &c.* According to the system of the Metempsychosis, a soul, to undergo purification, passes into the body of some insect or animal. It is of importance not to disturb this penance, as the work must in that case begin afresh. . . . *Paria.* This is the name of a cast or tribe reputed unclean, because they eat of what has enjoyed life.

Page *id.* (13). *Brama.—reduced to serve as a pedestal to the Lingam.* See *Sonnerat, Voyage aux Indes.* Vol. I.

Page 166. (14). *Hideous forms of a boar, a lion, &c.* These are the incarnations of Vichenou, or metamorphoses of the sun. He is to come at the end of the world, that is, at the expiration of the great period, in the form of a horse, like the four horses of the apocalypse.

Page *id.* (15). *In their devotion, &c.* When a sectary of Chiven hears the name of Vichenou pronounced, he stops his ears, flies, and purifies himself.

Page 167. (16). *The Chinese worship him under the name of*

of Fôt. The original name of this God is *Beits*, which in Hebrew ſignifies an egg. The Arabs pronounce it *Baidh*, giving to the *dh* an emphatic ſound which makes it approach to *dz*. Kempfer, an accurate traveller, writes it *Budſo*, which muſt be pronounced *Boudſo*, whence is derived the name of Budſoiſt and of Bonze, applied to the prieſts. Clement of Alexandria, in his Stromata, writes it *Bedou*, as it is pronounced alſo by the Chingulais; and Saint Jerome, *Beudda* and *Boutta*. At Thibet they call it Budd: and hence the name of the country called *Boud-tan* and *Ti-budd:* it was in this province that this ſyſtem of religion was firſt inculcated in Upper Aſia; *La* is a corruption of *Allah*, the name of God in the Syriac language, from which many of the Eaſtern dialects appear to be derived. The Chineſe having neither *b* nor *d*, have ſupplied their place by *f* and *t*, and have therefore ſaid *Fout*.

Page 168. (17). *That the ſoul can exiſt independently of the ſenſes.* See in Kempfer the doctrine of the Sintoiſts, which is a mixture of that of Epicurus and of the Stoics.

Page *id.* (18). *Talipat ſcreen.* It is a leaf of the *Lontarier* ſpecies of the palm tree. Hence the Bonzes of Siam take the appellation of *Talapoin*. The uſe of this ſcreen is an excluſive privilege.

Page *id.* (19). *Conjunction of the ſtars.* The ſectaries of Confucius are no leſs addicted to aſtrology than the Bonzes. It is indeed the malady of every eaſtern nation.

Page 169. (20). *The Grand Lama. The Delai-La-Ma*, or immenſe high prieſts of *La*, is the ſame perſon whom we find mentioned in our old books of travels, by the

name

name of Preſter John, from a corruption of the Perſian word *Djehan*, which ſignifies the world, to which has been prefixed the French word preſtre or prêtre, prieſt. Thus the *prieſt world* and the *God world* are in the Perſian idiom the ſame.

Page *id.* (21). *The excrements of their pontiff.* In a recent expedition, the Engliſh have found certain idols of the Lamas filled in the inſide with ſacred paſtils from the cloſe-ſtool of the high-prieſt. Mr. Haſtings, and Colonel Pollier who is now at Lauſanne, are living witneſſes of this fact, and undoubtedly worthy of credit. It will be very extraordinary to obſerve, that this diſguſting ceremony is connected with a profound philoſophical ſyſtem, to wit, that of the metempſychoſis, admitted by the Lamas. When the Tartars ſwallow theſe ſacred relics, which they are accuſtomed to do, they imitate the laws of the univerſe, the parts of which are inceſſantly abſorbed and paſs into the ſubſtance of each other. It is upon the model of the ſerpent who devours his tail, and this ſerpent is Budd and the world.

Page 170. (22). *The inhabitant of Jaida, &c.* It frequently happens, that the ſwine devour the very ſpecies of ſerpents which the negroes adore, which is a ſource of great deſolation in the country. Preſident de Broſſes has given us in his hiſtory of the *Fetiches*, a curious collection of abſurdities of this nature.... *The Teleuteans dreſſed, &c.* The Teleuteans, a Tartar nation, paint God as wearing a veſture of all colours, particularly red and green; and as theſe conſtitute the uniform of the Ruſſian dragoons, they compare him to this deſcription of ſoldiers. The Egyptians alſo dreſs the God World in a garment

garment of every colour. *Euſebius Præp. Evang. p.* 115. *l.* 3. The Teleuteans call God *Bon*, which is only an alteration of Bould, the God Egg and World.

Page *id.* (23). *The Kamchadale repreſents God under the figure of an ill natured and arbitrary old man.* Conſult upon this ſubject a work entitled, *Deſcription des Peuples ſoumis à la Ruſſie*, and it will be found that the picture is not overcharged.

Page 179. (24). *His ſon-in-law Ali, or his vicars Omar and Aboubekre.* Theſe are the two grand parties into which the Muſſulmans are divided. The Turks have embraced the ſecond, the Perſians the firſt.

Page 182. (25). *To make war upon infidels.* Whatever the advocates for the philoſophy and civiliſation of the Turks may aſſert, to make war upon infidels is conſidered by them as an obligatory precept and an act of religion. See *Reland de Relig. Moham.*

Page 190. (26). *Your ſyſtem reſts entirely on myſtical interpretations.* When we read the fathers of the church, and ſee upon what arguments they have built the edifice of religion, we are inexpreſſibly aſtoniſhed with their credulity, or their knavery; but allegory was the rage of that period: the Pagans employed it to explain the actions of their Gods, and the Chriſtians acted in the ſame ſpirit when they employed it after their faſhion.

Page 195. (27). *It was not till four hundred years after.* See the Chronology of the Twelve Ages, in which I conceive myſelf to have clearly proved that Moſes lived about 1400 years before Jeſus Chriſt, and Zoroaſter about a thouſand.

Page 196. (28). *In the corrected publication of their ſacred books.* In the firſt periods of the Chriſtian church, not only

only the moſt learned of thoſe who have ſince been denominated heretics, but many of the orthodox, conceived Moſes to have written neither the law nor the Pentateuch, but that the work was a compilation made by the elders of the people and the Seventy, who, after the death of Moſes, collected his ſcattered ordinances, and mixed with them things that were extraneous; ſimilar to what happened as to the Koran of Mahomet. See *Les Clementines*, Homel. 2. ſect. 51. and Homel. 3. ſect. 42.

Modern critics, more enlightened or more attentive than the ancients, have found in Geneſis in particular, marks of its having been compoſed on the return from the captivity; but the principal proofs have eſcaped them. Theſe I mean to exhibit in an analyſis of the book of Geneſis, in which I ſhall demonſtrate that the tenth chapter, among others, which treats of the pretended generations of the Man called Noah, is a real geographical picture of the world, as it was known to the Hebrews at the epoch of the captivity, which was bounded by Greece or Hellas at the Weſt, mount Caucaſus at the North, Perſia at the Eaſt, and Arabia and Upper Egypt at the South. All the pretended perſonages from Adam to Abraham or his father Terah, are mythological beings, ſtars, conſtellations, countries. Adam is Bootes; Noah is Oſyris, Xiſuthrus Janus, Saturn; that is to ſay Capricorn, or the celeſtial Genius that opened the year. The Alexandrian Chronicle ſays expreſsly, page 85, that Nimrod was ſuppoſed by the Perſians to be their firſt king, as having invented the art of hunting, and that he was tranſlated into heaven, where he appears under the name of Orion.

Page 197. (29). *Creation of the world in ſix gahans*, or

periods, or into ſix *gahan-bars*, that is, ſix periods of time. Theſe periods are what Zoroaſter calls the *thouſands of God* or of *light*, meaning the ſix ſummer months. In the firſt, ſay the Perſians, God created (arranged in order) the heavens; in the ſecond the waters; in the third the earth; in the fourth trees; in the fifth animals; and in the ſixth man: correſponding with the account in Geneſis. For particulars ſee *Hyde, ch.* 9. and *Henry Lord, ch.* 2. *On the religion of the ancient Perſians.* It is remarkable, that the ſame tradition is found in the ſacred books of the Etrurians, which relate, "that the "Fabricator of all things had compriſed the duration of "his work in a period of twelve thouſand years, which "period was diſtributed to the twelve houſes of the ſun." In the firſt thouſand, God made heaven and earth; in the ſecond, the firmament; in the third, the ſea and the waters; in the fourth, the ſun, moon, and ſtars; in the fifth, the ſoul of animals, birds, and reptiles; in the ſixth, man. See *Suidas*, at the word *Tyrrhena*; which ſhows firſt, the identity of their theological and aſtrological opinions; and ſecondly, the identity, or rather confuſion of ideas, between abſolute and ſyſtematical creation, that is, the periods aſſigned for renewing the face of nature, which were at firſt the period of the year, and afterwards periods of 60, of 600, of 25,000, of 36,000, and of 432,000 years.

Page 198. (30). *Auricular confeſſion, &c.* The modern Parſes and the ancient Mithriacs, who are the ſame ſect, obſerve all the Chriſtian ſacraments, even the laying on of hands in confirmation. "The prieſt of Mithra," ſays Tertullian (*de Præſcriptione*, c. 40.) "promiſes abſolution from "ſin on confeſſion and baptiſm; and, if I rightly remember, "Mithra

"Mithra marks the ſoldiers in the forehead (with the "chriſm, called in Egyptian *Kouphi)*; he celebrates "the ſacrifice of bread, which is the reſurrection, and "preſents the crown to his followers, menacing them at "the ſame time with the ſword, &c."

In theſe myſteries they tried the courage of the initiated with a thouſand terrors, preſenting fire to his face, a ſword to his breaſt, &c.; they alſo offered him a crown which he refuſed, ſaying, God is my crown: and this crown is to be ſeen in the celeſtial ſphere by the ſide of Bootes. The perſonages in theſe myſteries were diſtinguiſhed by the names of the animal conſtellations. The ceremony of maſs is nothing more than an imitation of theſe myſteries and thoſe of Eleuſis. The benediction *the Lord be with you*, is a literal tranſlation of the formular of admiſſion *chun-k. am, ſ-ak.* See *Beauſob. Hiſt. Du Manicheiſme*, vol. ii.

Page 199. (31). *The Vedas, the Chaſtres, and the Pourans.* Theſe are the ſacred volumes of the Hindoos; they are ſometimes written *Vedams, Pouranams, Chaſtrans*, becauſe the Hindoos, like the Perſians, are accuſtomed to give a naſal ſound to the terminations of their words, which we repreſent by the affixes *on* and *an*, and the Portugueſe by the affixes *om* and *am*. Many of theſe books have been tranſlated, thanks to the liberal ſpirit of Mr. Haſtings, who has founded at Calcutta a literary ſociety and a printing preſs. At the ſame time, however, that we expreſs our gratitude to this ſociety, we muſt be permitted to complain of its excluſive ſpirit, the number of copies printed of each book being ſuch as it is impoſſible to purchaſe them even in England; they are wholly in the hands of the Eaſt India proprietors.

Scarcely

Scarcely even is the Aſiatic Miſcellany known in Europe, and a man muſt be very learned in oriental antiquity before he ſo much as hears of the Jones's, the Wilkins's and the Halhed's, &c. As to the ſacred books of the Hindoos, all that are yet in our hands are the Bhagvat Geeta, the Ezour-Vedam, the Bagavadam, and certain fragments of the Chaſtres printed at the end of the Bhagvat Geeta. Theſe books are in Indoſtan what the Old and New Teſtament are in Chriſtendom, the Koran in Turkey, the Sad-der and the Zendaveſta among the Parſes, &c. When I have taken an extenſive ſurvey of their contents, I have ſometimes aſked myſelf, what would be the loſs to the human race if a new Omar condemned them to the flames; and unable to diſcover any miſchief that would enſue, I call the imaginary cheſt that contains them, the box of Pandora.

Page 201. (32). *Brama, Bichen or Viſchenou, Chib or Chiven.* Theſe names are differently pronounced according to the different dialects: thus they ſay *Birmah, Bremma, Brouma. Bichen* has been turned into *Vichen* by the eaſy exchange of a *B* for a *V*, and into *Vichenou* by means of a grammatical affix. In the ſame manner *Chib*, which is ſynonymous with Satan, and ſignifies adverſary, is frequently written *Chib-a* and *Chiv-en*; he is called alſo *Rouder* and *Routr-en*, that is, the deſtroyer.

Page *id.* (33). *In the ſhape of a tortoiſe.* This is the conſtellation *teſtudo*, or the *lyre*, which was at firſt a tortoiſe, on account of its ſlow motion round the Pole; then a lyre, becauſe it is the ſhell of this reptile on which the ſtrings of the lyre are mounted. See an excellent memoir of *M. Dupuis ſur l'Origine des Conſtellations, in 4to.*

Page 204. (34). *That you have borrowed the ancient Paganiſm*

Paganiſm of the Weſtern world. All the ancient opinions of the Egyptian and Grecian theologians are to be found in India, and they appear to have been introduced, by means of the commerce of Arabia and the vicinity of Perſia, time immemorial.

Page 205. (35). *Breathed upon the face of the waters.* This coſmogony of the Lamas, the Bonzes, and even the Bramins, as Henry Lord aſſerts, is literally that of the ancient Egyptians. "The Egyptians," ſays Porphyry, "call "*Kneph*, intelligence, or efficient cauſe of the univerſe. "They relate that this God vomitted an egg, from which "was produced another God named *Phtha* or Vulcan, "(igneous principle, or the ſun,) and they add, that "this egg is the world." *Euſeb. Præp. Evang.* p. 115.

"They repreſent," ſays the ſame author in another place, "the God *Kneph*, or efficient cauſe, under the "form of a man in deep blue (the colour of the ſky), "having in his hand a ſceptre, a belt round his body, and "a ſmall bonnet royal of light feathers on his head, to "denote how very ſubtile and fugacious the idea of that "being is." Upon which I ſhall obſerve, that *Kneph* in Hebrew ſignifies a wing, a feather, and that this colour of ſky-blue is to be found in the majority of the Indian Gods, and is, under the name of Narayan, one of their moſt diſtinguiſhing epithets.

Page 208. (36). *That the Lamas were a degenerate ſect of the Neſtorians.* This is aſſerted by our miſſionaries, and among others by Georgi in his unfiniſhed work of the Thibetan alphabet: but if it can be proved that the Manicheans were but plagiariſts, and the ignorant echo of a doctrine that exiſted fifteen hundred years before them, what becomes of the declarations of Georgi? See upon this ſubject *Beauſob. Hiſt. du Manicheiſme.*

But

But the Lama demonſtrated, &c. The eaſtern writers in general agree in placing the birth of *Bedou* 1027 years before Jeſus Chriſt, which makes him the contemporary of Zoroaſter, with whom, in my opinion, they confound him. It is certain that his doctrine notoriouſly exiſted at that epocha: it is found entire in that of Orpheus, Pythagoras, and the Indian gymnoſophiſts. But the gymnoſophiſts are cited at the time of Alexander as an ancient ſect already divided into Brachmans and Samaneans. See *Bardeſanes en Saint Jerome, Epitre à Jovien.* Pythagoras lived in the ninth century before Jeſus Chriſt; See *Chronology of the Twelve Ages*; and Orpheus is of ſtill greater antiquity. If, as is the caſe, the doctrine of Pythagoras and that of Orpheus are of Egyptian origin, that of Bedou goes back to the common ſource; and in reality the Egyptian prieſts recite that Hermes, as he was dying, ſaid: "I have hitherto lived an exile from my "country, to which I now return. Weep not for me, "I aſcend to the celeſtial abode, where each of you will "follow in his turn: there God is: this life is only "death." *Chalcidius in Thimæum.* Such was the profeſſion of faith of the Samaneans, the ſectaries of Orpheus, and the Pythagoreans. Farther, Hermes is no other than Bedou himſelf; for among the Indians, Chineſe, Lamas, &c. the planet Mercury and the correſponding day of the week (Wedneſday) bear the name of Bedou: and this accounts for his being placed in the rank of mythological beings, and diſcovers the illuſion of his pretended exiſtence as a man, ſince it is evident that Mercury was not a human being, but the Genius or Decan, who, placed at the ſummer ſolſtice, opened the

Egyptian year: hence his attributes taken from the conſtellation Syrius, and his name of Anubis, as well as that of Eſculapius, having the figure of a man and the head of a dog: hence his ſerpent, which is the Hydra, emblem of the Nile (Hydor, humidity); and from this ſerpent he ſeems to have derived his name of Hermes, as *Remes* (with a *ſchin*), in the oriental languages, ſignifies ſerpent. Now Bedou and Hermes being the ſame names, it is manifeſt of what antiquity is the ſyſtem aſcribed to the former. As to the name of Samanean, it is preciſely that of Chaman preſerved in Tartary, China, and India. The interpretation given to it is, *man of the woods*, a *hermit mortifying the fleſh*, ſuch being the characteriſtic of this ſect; but its literal meaning is *celeſtial* (Samâoui), and explains the ſyſtem of thoſe who are called by it. This ſyſtem is the ſame as that of the ſectaries of Orpheus, of the Eſſenians, of the ancient Anchorets of Perſia and the whole Eaſtern country. See *Porphyry, de Abſtin. Animal.* Theſe celeſtial and penitent men, carried in India their infanity to ſuch an extreme, as to wiſh not to touch the earth, and they accordingly lived in cages ſuſpended to trees, where the people, whoſe admiration was not leſs abſurd, brought them proviſions. During the night there were frequent robberies, rapes and murders, and it was at length diſcovered that they were committed by thoſe men, who, deſcending from their cages, thus indemnified themſelves for their reſtraint during the day. The Bramins, their rivals, embraced the opportunity of exterminating them; and from that time their name in India has been ſynonymous with hypocrite. See *Hiſt. de la Chine*, in 5 vols. 4to.

4to. at the note page 50; *Hiſt. de Huns*, 2 vols.; and Preface to the *Ezour-Vedam*.

Page 209. (37). *Demonſtrate his exiſtence, &c.* There are abſolutely no other monuments of the exiſtence of Jeſus Chriſt as a human being, than a paſſage in Joſephus (*Antiq. Jud. lib.* 18. *c.* 3.), a ſingle phraſe in Tacitus, *Annal. lib.* 15. *c.* 44.), and the Goſpels. But the paſſage in Joſephus is unanimouſly acknowledged to be apocryphal, and to have been interpolated towards the cloſe of the third century, (*See Trad. de Joſephe, par M. Gillet*); and that of Tacitus is ſo vague, and ſo evidently taken from the depoſition of the Chriſtians before the tribunals, that it may be ranked in the claſs of evangelical records. It remains to enquire of what authority are theſe records. "All the world knows," ſays Fauſtus, who, though a Manichean, was one of the moſt learned men of the third century, "All the world knows, that the Goſpels "were neither written by Jeſus Chriſt, nor his apoſtles, "but by certain unknown perſons, who, rightly judging "that they ſhould not obtain belief reſpecting things "which they had not ſeen, placed at the head of their "recitals the names of contemporary apoſtles." See *Beauſob.* vol. i. and *Hiſt. des Apologiſtes de la Relig. Chret. par Burigni*, a ſagacious writer, who has demonſtrated the abſolute uncertainty of thoſe foundations of the Chriſtian religion; ſo that the exiſtence of Jeſus is no better proved, than that of Oſiris and Hercules, or that of Fôt or Bedou, with whom, ſays M. de Guignes, the Chineſe continually confound him, for they never call Jeſus by any other name than Fôt. *Hiſt. de Huns.*

Page *id.* (38). *Your Goſpels are taken from the books of the Mithriacs.* That is to ſay, from the pious romances

formed out of the ſacred legends of the Myſteries of Mithra, Ceres, Iſis, &c.: from whence are equally derived the books of the Hindoos and the Bonzes. Our miſſionaries have long remarked a ſtriking reſemblance between thoſe books and the Goſpels. M. Wilkins expreſsly mentions it in a note in the Bhagvat-Geet. All agree that Kriſna, Fôt and Jeſus have the ſame characteriſtic features; but religious prejudice has ſtood in the way of drawing from this circumſtance the proper and natural inference. To time and reaſon muſt it be left to diſplay the truth.

Page 210. (39). *The interior and ſecret doctrine.* The Budſoiſts have two doctrines, the one public and oſtenſible, the other interior and ſecret, preciſely like the Egyptian prieſts. It may be aſked, why this diſtinction? It is, that as the public doctrine recommends offerings, expiations, endowments, &c. the prieſts find their profit in teaching it to the people; whereas the other, teaching the vanity of worldly things, and attended with no lucre, it is thought proper to make it known only to adepts. Can the teachers and followers of this religion, be better claſſed than under the heads of knavery and credulity?

Page 212. (40). *That happineſs and misfortune, &c.* Theſe are the expreſſions of La Loubere, in his deſcription of the kingdom of Siam and the theology of the Bonzes. Their dogmas, compared with thoſe of the ancient philoſophers of Greece and Italy, give a complete repreſentation of the whole ſyſtem of the Stoics and Epicureans, mixed with aſtrological ſuperſtitions, and ſome traits of Pythagoriſm.

Page 224. (41). *The original barbarous ſtate of mankind.*

It

It is the unanimous teſtimony of hiſtory, and even of legends, that the firſt human beings were every where ſavages, and that it was to civilize them, and teach them *to make bread*, that the Gods manifeſted themſelves.

Page *id.* (42). *Man receives no ideas but through the medium of his ſenſes.* The rock on which all the ancients have ſplit, and which has occaſioned all their errors, has been their ſuppoſing the idea of God to be innate and coeternal with the ſoul; and hence all the reveries developed in Plato and Jamblicus. See the *Timæus*, the *Phedon*, and *De Myſt. Ægyptiorum*, ſect. 1. c. 3.

Page 231. (43). *Record of all the monuments of antiquity.* It clearly reſults, ſays Plutarch, from the verſes of Orpheus and the ſacred books of the Egyptians and Phrygians, that the ancient theology, not only of the Greeks, but of all nations, was nothing more than a ſyſtem of phyſics, a picture of the operations of nature, wrapped up in myſterious allegories and enigmatical ſymbols, in a manner that the ignorant multitude attended rather to their apparent than to their hidden meaning, and even in what they underſtood of the latter, ſuppoſed there to be ſomething more deep than what they perceived. *Fragment of a work of Plutarch now loſt, quoted by Euſebius, Præpar. Evang. lib. 3. ch. 1. p. 83.*

The majority of philoſophers, ſays Porphyry, and among others Chæremon (who lived in Egypt in the firſt age of Chriſtianity), imagine there never to have been any other world than the one we ſee, and acknowledge no other Gods of all thoſe recognized by the Egyptians, than ſuch as are commonly called planets, ſigns of the Zodiac, and conſtellations; whoſe aſpects,

that is, riſing and ſetting, are ſuppoſed to influence the fortunes of men; to which they add, their diviſions of the ſigns into decans and diſpenſers of time, whom they ſtyle lords of the aſcendant, whoſe names, virtues in relieving diſtempers, riſing, ſetting, and preſages of future events, are the ſubjects of almanacks; (for be it obſerved, that the Egyptian prieſts had almanacks the exact counterpart of Matthew Lanſberg's); for when the prieſts affirmed that the ſun was the architect of the univerſe, Chæremon preſently concludes that all their narratives reſpecting Iſis and Oſiris, together with their other feigned fables, referred in part to the planets, the phaſes of the moon and the revolution of the ſun, and in part to the ſtars of the daily and nightly hemiſpheres and the river Nile; in a word, in all caſes to phyſical and natural exiſtences, and never to ſuch as might be immaterial and incorporeal... All theſe philoſophers believe, that the acts of our will, and the motion of our bodies, depend upon thoſe of the ſtars to which they are ſubjected, and they refer every thing to the laws of phyſical neceſſity, which they call deſtiny or *Fatum*, ſuppoſing a chain of cauſes and effects which binds, by I know not what connection, all beings together, from the meaneſt atom to the ſupreme power and primary influence of the Gods; ſo that, whether in their temples or in their idols, the only ſubject of worſhip is the power of deſtiny. *Porphyr. Epiſt. ad Janebonem.*

Page 232. (44). *The practice of agriculture required the obſervation and knowledge of the heavens.* it continues to be repeated every day, on the indirect authority of the book of Geneſis, that aſtronomy was the invention of the children of Noah. It has been gravely ſaid, that, while wandering

wandering ſhepherds in the plains of Shinar, they employed their leiſure in compoſing a planetary ſyſtem: as if ſhepherds had occaſion to know more than the Polar ſtar, and if neceſſity was not the ſole motive of every invention! If the ancient ſhepherds were ſo ſtudious and ſagacious, how does it happen that the modern ones are ſo ſtupid, ignorant, and inattentive? And it is a fact, that the Arabs of the deſert know not ſo many as ſix conſtellations, and underſtand not a word of aſtronomy.

Page 233. (45.) *Genii, Gods, authors of good and evil.* It appears that by the words genius, the ancients denoted a quality, a generative power; for the following words, which are all of one family, convey this meaning: *generare, genus, geneſis, genius, gens.*

The Sabeans, ancient and modern, ſays Maimonides, acknowledge a principal God, the maker and inhabitant of heaven; but on account of his great diſtance they conceive him to be inacceſſible; and in imitation of the conduct of people towards their kings, they employ as mediators with him, the planets and their angels, whom they call princes and potentates, and whom they ſuppoſe to reſide in thoſe luminous bodies as in palaces or tabernacles, &c. *More-Nebuchim, pars* 3. *c.* 29.

Page 234. (46.) *And even a ſex derived from the gender of its appellation.* According as the gender of the object was in the language of the nation maſculine or feminine, the Divinity who bore its name was male or female. Thus the Cappadocians called the moon God, and the ſun Goddeſs; a circumſtance which gives to the ſame beings a perpetual variety in ancient mythology.

Page 235. (47.) *Morality was a judicious practice of all that is conducive to the preſervation of exiſtence.* We may add,

ſays Plutarch, that theſe Egyptian prieſts always regarded the preſervation of health as a point of firſt importance, and as indiſpenſably neceſſary to the practice of piety and the ſervice of the Gods. See his account of *Iſis and Oſiris*, towards the end.

Page *id.* (48.) *That its principles* (thoſe of aſtronomy), *can be traced back to a period of* 17,000 *years.* The hiſtorical orator follows here the opinion of Mr. Dupuis, who, in his learned memoir concerning the origin of the conſtellations, has aſſigned many plauſible reaſons to prove that *Libra* was formerly the ſign of the vernal, and *Aries* of the nocturnal equinox; that is, that ſince the origin of the actual aſtronomical ſyſtem, the proceſſion of the equinoxes has carried forward by ſeven ſigns the primitive order of the Zodiac. Now eſtimating the proceſſion at about ſeventy years and a half to a degree, that is 2,115 years to each ſign; and obſerving that *Aries* was in its fifteenth degree, 1,447 years before Chriſt, it follows, that the firſt degree of *Libra* could not have coincided with the vernal equinox more lately than 15,194 years before Chriſt, to which if you add 1790 years ſince Chriſt, it appears that 16,984 have elapſed ſince the origin of the Zodiac. The vernal equinox coincided with the firſt degree of *Aries* 2,504 years before Chriſt, and with the firſt degree of *Taurus* 4,619 years before Chriſt. Now it is to be obſerved, that the worſhip of the Bull is the principal article in the theological creed of the Egyptians, Perſians, Japaneſe, &c.; from whence it clearly follows, that ſome general revolution took place among thoſe nations at that time. The chronology of five or ſix thouſand years in Geneſis is little agreeable to this hypotheſis; but as the book of Geneſis cannot claim to

be

be conſidered as a hiſtory farther back than Abraham, we are at liberty to make what arrangements we pleaſe in the eternity that preceded.

Page *id.* (49). *When reaſon finds there a zone of heaven equally free from the rains of the equator and the fogs of the North.* Mr. Bailli, in placing the firſt aſtronomers at Selingenſkoy, near the lake Baikal, paid no attention to this twofold circumſtance: it equally argues againſt their being placed at Axoum on account of the rains, and the *Zimb fly* of which Mr. Bruce ſpeaks.

Page 238. (50). *Man gave to the ſtars, &c.* "The "ancients," ſays Maimonides, "directing all their at-"tention to agriculture, gave names to the ſtars derived "from their occupation during the year." *More N.b. pars* 3.

Page 240. (51). *They call by the name of ſerpents the figured traces of the orbits.* The ancients had verbs from the ſubſtantives *crab*, *goat*, *tortoiſe*, as the French have at preſent the verbs *ſerpenter*, *coquetier*. The hiſtory of all languages is nearly the ſame.

Page 243. (52.) *If they had not ſeen in them taliſmans partaking of the nature of the ſtars.* The ancient aſtrologers, ſays the moſt learned of the Jews (Maimonides), having ſacredly aſſigned to each planet a colour, an animal, a tree, a metal, a fruit, a plant, formed from them all a figure or repreſentation of the ſtar, taking care to ſelect for the purpoſe a proper moment, a fortunate day, ſuch as the conjunction of the ſtar, or ſome other favourable aſpect. They conceived, that by their magic ceremonies they could introduce into thoſe figures or idols the influences of the ſuperior beings after which they were modelled. Theſe were the idols that the Chaldean-

Sabeans

Sabeans adored; and in the performance of their worſhip they were obliged to be dreſſed in the proper colour.... The aſtrologers, by their practices, thus introduced idolatry, deſirous of being regarded as the diſpenſers of the favours of heaven; and as agriculture was the ſole employment of the ancients, they ſucceeded in perſuading them, that the rain and other bleſſings of the ſeaſons were at their diſpoſal. Thus the whole art of agriculture was exerciſed by rules of aſtrology, and the prieſts made taliſmans or charms which were to drive away locuſts, flies, &c. See *Maimonides, More, Nebuchim, pars* 3. *c.* 29.

The prieſts of Egypt, Perſia, India, &c. pretended to bind the Gods to their idols, and to make them come from heaven at their pleaſure. They threatened the ſun and moon, if they were diſobedient, to reveal the ſecret myſteries, to ſhake the ſkies, &c. &c. *Euſeb. Præcep. Evang. p.* 198, *and Iamblicus de Myſteriis Ægypt.*

Page *id.* (53). *The ſun was ſuppoſed to aſſume their forms* (the forms of the twelve animals). Theſe are the very words of Iamblicus de Symbolis Ægyptiorum, c. 2. ſect. 7. The ſun was the grand Proteus, the univerſal metamorphiſt.

Page 245. (54). *Your tenſure is the diſk of the ſun.* The Arabs, ſays Herodotus, ſhave their heads in a circle and about the temples, in imitation of Bacchus (that is the ſun,) who ſhaves himſelf, they ſay, in this manner. Jeremiah ſpeaks alſo of this cuſtom. The tuft of hair which the Mahometans preſerve, is taken alſo from the ſun, who was painted by the Egyptians at the winter ſolſtice, as having but a ſingle hair on his head.... *Your ſkirt its Zodiac.* The robes of the goddeſs of Syria and of Diana

of

of Epheſus, from whence are borrowed the dreſs of prieſts, have the twelve animals of the Zodiac painted on them. . . . *Roſaries* are found upon all the Indian idols, conſtructed more than four thouſand years ago; and their uſe in the Eaſt has been univerſal for time immemorial. . . . The *croſier* is preciſely the ſtaff of Bootes or Oſiris (See Plate II). All the Lamas wear the *mitre* or cap in the ſhape of a cone, which was an emblem of the ſun.

Page 247. (55). *Having ſaid that a planet entered into a ſign, their conjunction was denominated a marriage*, &c. Theſe are the very words of Plutarch in his account of Iſis and Oſiris. The Hebrews ſay, in ſpeaking of the generations of the Patriarchs, *et ingreſſus eſt in eam*. From this continual equivoque of ancient language, proceeds every miſtake.

Page *id.* (56). *The combination of theſe figures had alſo a meaning*. The reader will doubtleſs ſee, with pleaſure, ſome examples of ancient hieroglyphics.

"The Egyptians (ſays Hor-appolo) repreſent eternity by the figure of the ſun and moon. They deſignate the world by a blue ſerpent with yellow ſcales (ſtars, it is the Chineſe Dragon). If they were deſirous of expreſſing the year, they drew a picture of Iſis, who is alſo in their language called *Sothis*, or dog-ſtar, one of the firſt conſtellations, by the riſing of which the year commences: its inſcription at Sais was, *It is I that riſe in the conſtellation of the Dog*.

"They alſo repreſent the year by a palm tree, and the month by one of its branches, becauſe it is the nature of this tree to produce a branch every month. They farther repreſent it by the fourth part of an acre of land." (The whole

whole acre divided into four denotes the biſſextile period of four years. The abbreviation of this figure of a field in four diviſions, is manifeſtly the letter *hâ* or *hêt*, the ſeventh in the Samaritan alphabet; and in general all the letters of the alphabet are merely aſtronomical hieroglyphics; and it is for this reaſon that the mode of writing is from right to left, like the march of the ſtars). —"They denote a prophet by the image of a dog, becauſe the dog-ſtar (*Anoubis*) by its riſing gives notice of the inundation. *Noubi* in Hebrew ſignifies prophet.—They repreſent inundation by a lion, becauſe it takes place under that ſign: and hence, ſays Plutarch, the cuſtom of placing at the gates of temples figures of lions with water iſſuing from their mouths.—They expreſs the idea of God and Deſtiny by a ſtar. They alſo repreſent God, ſays Porphyry, by a black ſtone, becauſe his nature is dark and obſcure. All white things expreſs the celeſtial and luminous Gods: all circular ones the world, the moon, the ſun, the deſtinies: all ſemicircular ones as bows and creſcents, are alſo deſcriptive of the moon. Fire and the Gods of Olympus, they repreſent by pyramids and obeliſks: (the name of the ſun *Baal* is found in this latter word): the ſun, by a cone (the mitre of Oſiris): the earth, by a cylinder (which revolves): the generative power of the air, by the *phalus*, and that of the earth, by a triangle, emblem of the female organ. *Euſeb. Præcep. Evang. p.* 98.

"Clay (ſays Iamblicus de Symbolis, ſect. 7. c. 2.) denotes matter, the generative and nutrimental power, every thing which receives the warmth and fermentation of life.

"A man ſitting upon the *Lotos* or *Nenuphar*, repreſents

the moving ſpirit (the ſun), which, in like manner as the plant lives in the water without any communication with clay, exiſts equally diſtinct from matter, ſwimming in empty ſpace, reſting on itſelf: it is round alſo in all its parts like the leaves, the flowers and the fruit of the Lotos. (Brama has the eyes of the Lotos, ſays Chaſter Neadirſen, to denote his intelligence: his eye ſwims over every thing, like the flowers of the Lotos on the waters). A man at the helm of a ſhip, adds Iamblicus, is deſcriptive of the ſun which governs all. And Porphyry tells us, that the ſun is alſo repreſented by a man in a ſhip reſting upon an amphibious crocodile (emblem of air and water).

« At Elephantine they worſhipped the figure of a man in a ſitting poſture, painted blue, having the head of a ram, and the horns of a goat which encompaſſed a diſk: all which repreſented the ſun and moon's conjunction at the ſign of the ram; the blue colour denoting the power of the moon, at the period of junction, to raiſe water into clouds. *Euſeb. Præcep. Evang. p.* 116.

« The hawk is an emblem of the ſun and of light, on account of his rapid flight, and his ſoaring into the higheſt regions of the air where light abounds.

« A fiſh is the emblem of averſion, and the *Hippopotamus* of violence, becauſe it is ſaid to kill its father and raviſh its mother. Hence, ſays Plutarch, the emblematical inſcription of the temple of Sais, where we ſee painted on the veſtibule, 1. A child. 2. An old man. 3. A hawk. 4. A fiſh. 5. A hippopotamus; which ſignify, 1. Entrance (into life). 2. Departure. 3. God. 4. Hatred. 5. Injuſtice. (See *Iſis & Oſiris*).

« The Egyptians, adds he, repreſent the world by a Sca-

a Scarabeus, becauſe this inſect puſhes, in a direction contrary to that in which it proceeds, a ball containing its eggs, juſt as the heaven of the fixed ſtars cauſes the revolution of the ſun (the yolk of an egg) in an oppoſite direction to its own.

"They repreſent the world alſo by the number *five*, being that of the elements, which, ſays Diodorus, are earth, water, air, fire, and ether or *ſpiritus*. The Indians have the ſame number of elements, and according to Macrobius's Myſtics they are the ſupreme God, or *primum mobile*, the intelligence, or *mens*, born of him, the ſoul of the world which proceeds from him, the celeſtial ſpheres and all things terreſtrial. Hence, adds Plutarch, the analogy between the Greek *pente*, five, and *pan*, all.

"The aſs," ſays he again, "is the emblem of Typhon, becauſe like that animal he is of a reddiſh colour. Now Typhon ſignifies whatever is of a miſcy or clayey nature; (and in Hebrew I find the three words *clay*, *red*, and *aſs*, to be formed from the ſame root, *hamr*. Iamblicus has farther told us, that clay was the emblem of matter; and he elſewhere adds, that all evil and corruption proceeded from matter: which, compared with the phraſe of Macrobius, *all is periſhable*, liable to change in the celeſtial ſphere, gives us the theory, firſt phyſical, then moral, of the ſyſtem of good and evil of the ancients."

Page 252. (57). *The ſenſeleſs cauſe of ſuperſtition.* Theſe are properly the words of Plutarch, who relates, that thoſe various worſhips were given by a king of Egypt to the different towns to diſunite and enſlave them (and theſe kings had been taken from the caſt of prieſts). See *Iſis & Oſiris.*

Page 255. (58). *In the projection of the celeſtial ſphere.*

The ancient prieſts had three kind of ſpheres, which it may be uſeful to make known to the reader.

"We read in Euſebius," ſays Porphyry, "that Zoroaſter was the firſt who, having fixed upon a cavern pleaſantly ſituated in the mountains adjacent to Perſia, formed the idea of conſecrating it to Mithra (the ſun) creator and father of all things: that is to ſay, having made in this cavern ſeveral geometrical diviſions, repreſenting the ſeaſons and the elements, he imitated on a ſmall ſcale the order and diſpoſition of the univerſe by Mithra. After Zoroaſter, it became a cuſtom to conſecrate caverns for the celebration of myſteries: ſo that in like manner as temples were dedicated to the Gods, rural altars to heroes and terreſtrial deities, &c. ſubterraneous abodes to infernal deities, ſo caverns and grottoes were conſecrated to the world, to the univerſe, and to the nymphs: and from hence Pythagoras and Plato borrowed the idea of calling the earth a cavern, a cave, *de Antro Nympharum.*"

Such was the firſt projection of the ſphere in relief: though the Perſians give the honour of the invention to Zoroaſter, it is doubtleſs due to the Egyptians; for we may ſuppoſe, from this projection being the moſt ſimple, that it was the moſt ancient; the caverns of Thebes, full of ſimilar pictures, tend to ſtrengthen this opinion.

The following was the ſecond projection, "The prophets or hierophants," ſays Biſhop Synneſius, "who had been initiated in the myſteries, do not permit the common workmen to form idols or images of the Gods; but they deſcend themſelves into the ſacred caves, where they have concealed coffers containing certain ſpheres, upon

upon which they conſtruct thoſe images ſecretly and without the knowledge of the people, who deſpiſe ſimple and natural things, and wiſh for prodigies and fables." (*Syn. in Cadvit*). That is, the ancient prieſts had armulary ſpheres like ours; and this paſſage, which ſo well agrees with that of Chærcmon, gives us the key to all their theological aſtrology.

Laſtly, they had *fiat models* of the nature of Plate II. with this difference, that they were of a very complicated nature, having every fictitious diviſion of decan and ſub-decan, with the hieroglyphic ſigns of their influence. Kircher has given us a copy of one of them in his Egyptian Œdipus, and Gybelin a figured fragment in his book of the calendar (under the name of the Egyptian Zodiac). The ancient Egyptians, ſays the aſtrologer Julius Firmicus (*Aſtron. lib.* ii. and *lib.* iv. *c.* 16). divide each ſign of the Zodiac into three ſections; and each ſection was under the direction of an imaginary being, whom they called *Decan* or *chief of ten*; ſo that there were three Decans a month, and thirty-three a year. Now theſe Decans, who were alſo called Gods (*Theoi*), regulate the deſtinies of mankind—and they were placed particularly in certain ſtars. They afterwards imagined in every *ten* three other Gods, whom they called *arbiters*; ſo that there were nine for every month, and theſe were farther divided into an infinite number of powers. (The Perſians and Indians made their ſpheres on ſimilar plans; and if a picture thereof were to be drawn from the deſcription given by Scaliger at the end of Manilius, we ſhould find in it a complete explanation of their hieroglyphics, for every article forms one).

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Page *id.* (56). *The adverſe Genii.* It was for this reaſon the Perſians always wrote the name of Ahrimanes inverted thus: ꜱaurıuuıqV

Page 256. (60). *Typhon, that is to ſay deluge.* Typhon, pronounced Touphon by the Greeks, is preciſely the *touphan* of the Arabs, which ſignifies deluge; and theſe deluges in mythology are nothing more than winter and the rains, or the overflowing of the Nile; as their pretended fires which are to deſtroy the world, are ſimply the ſummer ſeaſon. And it is for this reaſon that Ariſtotle (*De Meteor. lib.* I. *c.* xiv), ſays, that the winter of the great cyclic year is a deluge; and its ſummer a conflagration. "The Egyptians," ſays Porphyry, "employ every year a taliſman in remembrance of the world: at the ſummer ſolſtice they mark their houſes, flocks and trees with red, ſuppoſing that on that day the whole world had been ſet on fire. It was alſo at the ſame period that they celebrated the pyrric or fire dance." (And this illuſtrates the origin of purifications by fire and by water; for having denominated the tropic of Cancer the gate of heaven, and of genial heat or celeſtial fire, and that of Capricorn the gate of deluge or of water, it was imagined that the ſpirits or ſouls who paſſed through theſe gates in their way to and from heaven, were *roaſted* or *bathed*: hence the baptiſm of Mithra, and the paſſage through flames, obſerved throughout the Eaſt long before Moſes).

Page *id.* (61). *In Perſia in a ſubſequent period.* That is, when the ram became the equinoxial ſign, or rather when the alteration of the ſkies ſhewed that it was no longer the Bull. See Note 48.

Page 257. (62). *Whence are derived all religious acts of*

a gay nature. All the ancient feſtivals reſpecting the return and exaltation of the ſun were of this deſcription: hence the *hilaria* of the Roman calendar at the period of the paſſage (Paſcha) of the vernal equinox. The dances were imitations of the march of the planets. Thoſe of the Derviſes ſtill repreſent it to this day.

Page 258. (63). *All religious acts of the ſombre kind.* "Sacrifices of blood," ſays Porphyry, "were only offered to Demons and evil Genii to avert their wrath ... Demons are fond of blood, humidity, ſtench." *Apud. Euſeb. Prap. Ev. p.* 173.

"The Egyptians," ſays Plutarch "only offer bloody victims to Typhon. They ſacrifice to him a red ox, and the animal immolated is held in execration, and loaded with all the ſins of the people." (The goat of Moſes). See *Iſis and Oſiris.*

Diviſion of terreſtrial beings into pure and impure, ſacred and abominable. Strabo ſays, ſpeaking of Moſes and the Jews, "Circumciſion and the prohibition of certain kinds of meat ſprung from ſuperſtition."—And I obſerve, reſpecting the ceremony of circumciſion, that its object was to take from the ſymbol of Oſiris (*Phallus*) the pretended obſtacle to fecundity; an obſtacle which bore the ſeal of Typhon, "whoſe nature," ſays Plutarch, "is made up of all that *hinders, oppoſes, cauſes obſtruction.*"

Page 260. (64). *Eryſian-fields. Aliz,* in the Phenician or Hebrew language ſignifies dancing and joyous.

Page 262. (65). *The Milky way.* See *Macrob. Som. Scip.* c. 12; and Note (73).

Page 265. (66). *The bodies of its inhabitants caſt no ſhade.* There is on this ſubject a paſſage in Plutarch, ſo intereſting and explanatory of the whole of this ſyſtem, that

that we ſhall cite it entire. Having obſerved that the theory of good and evil had at all times occupied the attention of philoſophers and theologians, he adds: « Many ſuppoſe there to be two Gods of oppoſite inclinations, one delighting in good the other in evil; the firſt of theſe is called particularly by the name of God, the ſecond by that of Genius or Demon. Zoroaſter has denominated them Oromaze and Ahrimanes, and has ſaid that, of whatever falls under the cognizance of our ſenſes, light is the beſt repreſentation of the one, and darkneſs and ignorance of the other. He adds, that Mithra is an intermediate being, and it is for this reaſon the Perſians call Mithra the *mediator* or *intermediator*. Each of theſe Gods has diſtinct plants and animals conſecrated to him; for example, dogs, birds and hedge-hogs belong to the good Genius, and all aquatic animals to the evil one.

« The Perſians alſo ſay, that Oromaze was born or formed out of the pureſt light; Ahrimanes, on the contrary, out of the thickeſt darkneſs: that Oromaze made ſix Gods as good as himſelf, and Ahrimanes oppoſed to them ſix wicked ones: that Oromaze afterwards multiplied himſelf threefold (Hermes triſmegiſtus), and removed to a diſtance as remote from the ſun as the ſun is remote from the earth; that he there formed ſtars, and, among others, *Syrius*, which he placed in the heavens as a guard and centinel. He made alſo twenty-four other Gods, which he incloſed in an egg; but Ahrimanes created an equal number on his part, who broke the egg, and from that moment good and evil were mixed (in the univerſe). But Ahrimanes is one day to be conquered, and the earth to be made *equal* and *ſmooth*, that all men may live happy.

Theopompus adds, from the books of the Magi, that one of theſe Gods reigns in turn every three thouſand years, during which the other is kept in ſubjection; that they afterwards contend with equal weapons during a ſimilar portion of time, but that in the end the evil Genius will fall (never to riſe again). Then men will become happy, and their bodies caſt no ſhade. The God who meditates all theſe things reclines at preſent in repoſe, waiting till he ſhall be pleaſed to execute them." See *Iſis and Oſiris*.

There is an apparent allegory through the whole of this paſſage. The egg is the fixed ſphere, the world: the ſix Gods of Oromaze are the ſix ſigns of ſummer, thoſe of Ahrimanes the ſix ſigns of winter. The forty-eight other Gods are the forty-eight conſtellations of the ancient ſphere, divided equally between Ahrimanes and Oromaze. The office of *Syrius*, as guard and centinel, tells us that the origin of theſe ideas was Egyptian: finally, the expreſſion that the earth is to become *equal* and *ſmooth*, and that the bodies of happy beings are to caſt no ſhade, proves that the equator was conſidered as their true paradiſe.

Page 265. (67). *The cave of Mithra.* See Note (58). In the caves which prieſts every where conſtructed, they celebrated myſteries which conſiſted (ſays Origen againſt Celſus) in imitating the motion of the ſtars, the planets, and the heavens. The initiated took the name of conſtellations and aſſumed the figures of animals. One was a lion, another a raven, and a third a ram. Hence the uſe of maſks in the firſt repreſentation of the drama. See *Ant. Deveſil*, vol. ii. p. 244. "In the myſteries of Ceres the chief in the proceſſion called himſelf the creator; the bearer of the torch was denominated the ſun:

the perſon neareſt to the altar, the moon; the herald or deacon, Mercury. In Egypt there was a feſtival in which the men and women repreſented the year, the age, the ſeaſons, the different parts of the day, and they walked in proceſſion after Bacchus. *Athen. lib.* v. *c.* 7. In the cave of Mithra was a ladder with ſeven ſteps, repreſenting the ſeven ſpheres of the planets, by means of which ſouls aſcended and deſcended. This is preciſely the ladder in Jacob's viſion, which ſhows that at that epocha the whole ſyſtem was formed. There is in the French king's library a ſuperb volume of pictures of the Indian Gods, in which the ladder is repreſented with the ſouls of men mounting it."

Page 267. (68). *Exact calculation.* Conſult the ancient aſtronomy of M. Bailly, and you will find our aſſertions reſpecting the knowledge of the prieſts amply proved.

Page 269. (69). *A reciprocal connection.* Theſe are the very words of Jamblicus. *De Myſt. Ægypt.*

Page *id.* (70). *Or rather electrical fluid.* The more I conſider what the ancients underſtood by *ether*, and *ſpirit*, and what the Indians call *akaſha*, the ſtronger do I find the analogy between it and electrical fluid. A luminous fluid, principle of warmth and motion, pervading the univerſe, forming the matter of the ſtars, having ſmall round particles, which inſinuate themſelves into bodies, and fill them by dilating itſelf, be their extent what it will, what can more ſtrongly reſemble electricity?

Page *id.* (71). *Was ſuppoſed to have the ſun for its heart.* Natural philoſophers, ſays Macrobius, call the ſun the heart of the world. *Som. Scip. c.* 20. The Egyptians, ſays Plutarch, call the Eaſt the *face*, the North the *right-ſide*,

and the South the *left-ſide* of the world, becauſe there the heart is placed. They continually compare the univerſe to a man; and hence the celebrated *microcoſm* of the Alchymiſts. We obſerve by the by, that the Alchymiſts, Cabaliſts, Free-maſons, Magnetiſers, Martiniſts, and every other ſuch ſort of viſionaries, are but the miſtaken diſciples of this ancient ſchool: we ſay miſtaken, becauſe, in ſpite of their pretenſions, the thread of the occult ſcience is broken.

Page *id.* (72). *That the world was eternal.* See the Pythagorean *Ocellus Lucanus.*

Page 270. (73). *The Orphic egg.* This compariſon of the ſun with the yolk of an egg refers, 1. To its round and yellow figure; 2. To its central ſituation; 3. To the germ or principle of life contained in the yolk. May not the oval form of the egg allude to the eliptis of the orbs? I am inclined to this opinion. The word Orphic offers a farther obſervation. Macrobius ſays (*Som. Scip. c.* 14. and *c.* 20), that the ſun is the brain of the univerſe, and that it is from analogy that the ſkull of a human being is round, like the planet, the ſeat of intelligence. Now the word *Orph* (with *ain*) ſignifies in Hebrew the brain and its ſeat (*cervix*): Orpheus, then, is the ſame as Bedou, or Baits; and the Bonzes are thoſe very Orphics which Plutarch repreſents as quacks, who ate no meat, vended taliſmans, and little ſtones, and deceived individuals, and even governments themſelves. See a learned Memoir of *Freret ſur les Orphiques, Acad. des Inſcrip. vol.* 23. *in* 4*to.*

Page *id.* (74). *Wearing on his head a ſphere of gold.* See *Porphyry in Euſebius, Præp. Evang. lib.* 3. *p.* 115.

Page 271. (75). *Alluding to the wind.* The Northern

or

or *Eteſian* wind, which commences regularly at the ſolſtice, with the inundation.

Page 272. (76). *You-piter*. This is the true pronunciation of the Jupiter of the Latins. . . . *Exiſtence itſelf*. This is the ſignification of the word *You*. See Note (84).

Page 273. (77). *Producing the great egg*. See Note (35).

Page *id.* (78). *The immortality of the ſoul, which at firſt was eternity*. In the ſyſtem of the firſt ſpiritualiſts, the ſoul was not created with, or at the ſame time as the body, in order to be inſerted in it: its exiſtence was ſuppoſed to be anterior and from all eternity. Such, in a few words, is the doctrine of Macrobius on this head. *Som. Scip. paſſim.*

"There exiſts a luminous, igneous, ſubtle fluid, which, under the name of ether and ſpiritus, fills the univerſe. It is the eſſential principle and agent of motion and life, it is the Deity. When an earthly body is to be animated, a ſmall round particle of this fluid gravitates through the milky way towards the lunar ſphere, where, when it arrives, it unites with a groſſer air, and becomes fit to aſſociate with matter: it then enters and entirely fills the body, animates it, ſuffers, grows, increaſes, and diminiſhes with it; laſtly, when the body dies, and its groſs elements diſſolve, this incorruptible particle takes its leave of it, and returns to the grand ocean of ether, if not retained by its union with the lunar air: it is this air or gas, which, retaining the ſhape of the body, becomes a phantom or ghoſt, the perfect repreſentation of the deceaſed. The Greeks called this phantom the image or idol of the ſoul; the Pythagoreans, its chariot, its frame; and the Rabbinical ſchool, its veſſel, or boat. When a man had conducted himſelf well in this world, his

whole ſoul, that is, its chariot and ether, aſcended to the moon, where a ſeparation took place: the chariot lived in the lunar Elyſium, and the ether returned to the fixed ſphere, that is, to God: for the fixed heaven, ſays Macrobius, was by many called by the name of God (c. 14.) If a man had not lived virtuouſly, the ſoul remained on earth to undergo purification, and was to wander to and fro, like the ghoſts of Homer, to whom this doctrine muſt have been known, ſince he wrote after the time of Pherecydes and Pythagoras, who were its promulgators in Greece. Herodotus, upon this occaſion, ſays, that the whole romance of the ſoul and its tranſmigrations was invented by the Egyptians, and propagated in Greece by men, who pretended to be its authors. I know their names, adds he, but ſhall not mention them (*lib.* 2). Cicero, however, has poſitively informed us, that it was Pherecydes, maſter of Pythagoras. *Tuſcul. lib.* 1. *ſect.* 16. Now admitting that this ſyſtem was at that period a novelty, it acounts for Solomon's treating it as a fable, who lived 130 years before Pherecydes. "Who knoweth," ſays he, "the ſpirit of a man that it goeth upwards? I ſaid in my heart concerning the eſtate of the ſons of men, that God might manifeſt them, and that they might ſee that they themſelves are beaſts. For that which befalleth the ſons of men, befalleth beaſts; even one thing befalleth them: as the one dieth, ſo dieth the other; yea they have all one breath, ſo that a man hath no pre-eminence above a beaſt: for all is vanity." Eccles. c. iii. v. 18.

And ſuch had been the opinion of Moſes, as a tranſlator of Herodotus (M. Archer of the Academy of Inſcriptions), juſtly obſerves in note 389 of the ſecond book, where

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where he ſays alſo, that the immortality of the ſoul was not introduced among the Hebrews till their intercourſe with the Aſſyrians. In other reſpects, the whole Pythagorean ſyſtem, properly analyſed, appears to be merely a ſyſtem of phyſics badly underſtood.

Page 275. (79). *The world is a machine; it has therefore an artificer.* All the arguments of the ſpiritualiſts are founded on this. See *Macrobius*, at the end of the ſecond book, and *Plato*, with the comments of *Marcilius Ficinus*. Δημιουργος = Opifex, Conditor.

Page 276. (80). *The demi-ourgos, the logos, and the ſpirit.* Theſe are the real types of the Chriſtian Trinity. See Note (99).

Page 277. (81). *Its very names.* In our laſt analyſis we found all the names of the Deity to be derived from ſome material object in which it was ſuppoſed to reſide. We have given a conſiderable number of inſtances; let us add one more relative to our word *God*. This is known to be the *Deus* of the Latins, and the *Theos* of the Greeks. Now by the confeſſion of Plato (*in Cratylo*), of Macrobius (*Saturn, lib.* 1. *c.* 24), and of Plutarch (*Iſis & Oſiris*), its root is *thein*, which ſignifies to wander, like *planeïn*, that is to ſay, it is ſynonimous with planets; becauſe, add our authors, both the ancient Greeks and barbarians particularly worſhipped the planets. I know that ſuch enquiries into etymologies have been much decried: but if, as is the caſe, words are the repreſentative ſigns of ideas, the genealogy of the one becomes that of the other, and a good etymological dictionary would be the moſt perfect hiſtory of the human underſtanding. It would only be neceſſary in this enquiry to obſerve certain precautions, which have hitherto

hitherto been neglected, and particularly to make an exact compariſon of the value of the letters of the different alphabets. But, to continue our ſubject, we ſhall add, that in the Phenician language, the word *thah* (with *ain*) ſignifies alſo to wander, and appears to be the derivation of *theïn*. If we ſuppoſe *Deus* to be derived from the Greek *Zeus*, a proper name of *You-piter*, having *zaw*, I live, for its root, its ſenſe will be preciſely that of *you*, and will mean *ſoul* of the world, *igneous* principle. See Note (84). *Div-us*, which only ſignifies Genius, God of the ſecond order, appears to me to come from the oriental word *div* ſubſtituted for *dib*, wolf and chacal, one of the emblems of the ſun. At Thebes, ſays Macrobius, the ſun was painted under the form of a wolf or chacal, for there are no wolves in Egypt. The reaſon of this emblem, doubtleſs, is that the chacal, like the cock, announces by its cries the ſun's riſing; and this reaſon is confirmed by the analogy of the words *lykos*, wolf, and *lykê*, light of the morning, whence comes *lux*.

Dius, which is to be underſtood alſo of the ſun, muſt be derived from *dih*, a hawk. "The Egyptians," ſays Porphyry (*Euſeb. Præcep. Evang. p.* 92), "repreſent the ſun under the emblem of a hawk, becauſe this bird ſoars to the higheſt regions of air where light abounds." And in reality we contiuually ſee at Cairo large flights of theſe birds, hovering in the air, from whence they deſcend not but to ſtun us with their ſhrieks, which are like the monoſyllable *dih*: and here, as in the preceding example, we find an analogy between the word *dies*, day, light, and *Dius*, God, Sun.

Page 278. (82). *The progreſs of ſcience and diſcovery.* One of the proofs that all theſe ſyſtems were invented in Egypt,

Egypt, is, that this is the only country where we ſee a complete body of doctrine formed from the remoteſt antiquity.

Clemens Alexandrinus has tranſmitted to us (*Stromat. lib.* 6.), a curious detail of the 42 volumes which were borne in the proceſſion of Iſis. "The prieſt," ſays he, "or chanter, carries one of the ſymbolic inſtruments of "muſic, and two of the books of Mercury; one containing hymns of the Gods, the other the liſt of kings. "Next to him the *horoſcope* (the regulator of time), "carries a palm and a dial, ſymbols of aſtrology; he "muſt know by heart the four books of Mercury which "treat of aſtrology: the firſt on the order of the planets; "the ſecond on the riſings of the ſun and moon, and "the two laſt on the riſing and aſpect of the ſtars. "Then comes the ſacred author, with feathers on his "head (like *Kneph*) and a book in his hand, together "with ink, and a reed to write with (as is ſtill the "practice among the Arabs). He muſt be verſed in "hieroglyphics, muſt underſtand the deſcription of the "univerſe, the courſe of the ſun, moon, ſtars, and "planets, be acquainted with the diviſion of Egypt into "36 *nomes*, with the courſe of the Nile, with inſtruments, meaſures, ſacred ornaments, and ſacred places. "Next comes the ſtole bearer, who carries the cubit of "juſtice, or meaſure of the Nile, and a cup for the libations; he bears alſo in the proceſſion ten volumes on "the ſubject of ſacrifices, hymns, prayers, offerings, "ceremonies, feſtivals. Laſtly arrives the prophet, bearing in his boſom a pitcher, ſo as to be expoſed to view; "he is followed by perſons carrying bread (as at the "marriage of Cana). This prophet, as preſident of the "myſteries,

« myſteries, learns ten other ſacred volumes, which treat « of the laws, the Gods, and the diſcipline of the prieſts. « Now there are in all forty-two volumes, thirty-ſix of « which are ſtudied and got by heart by theſe perſonages, « and the remaining ſix are ſet apart to be conſulted by « the *paſtophores*: they treat of medicine, the conſtruction « of the human body (anatomy), diſeaſes, remedies, in- « ſtruments, &c. &c."

We leave the reader to deduce all the conſequences of ſuch an Encyclopedia. It is aſcribed to Mercury; but Jamblicus tells us that each book, compoſed by prieſts, was dedicated to that God, who, on account of his title of Genius or *decan* opening the zodiac, preſided over every enterpriſe. He is the *Janus* of the Romans, and the *Guianeſa* of the Indians, and it is remarkable that *Yanus* and *Guianes* are homonymous. In ſhort, it appears that theſe books are the ſource of all that has been tranſmitted to us by the Greeks and Latins in every ſcience, even in alchymy, necromancy, &c. What is moſt to be regretted in their loſs, is that part which related to the principles of medicine and diet, in which the Egyptians appear to have made a conſiderable progreſs, and to have delivered many uſeful obſervations.

Page 279. (83). *The reigning religion in Lower Egypt.* « At a certain period," ſays Plutarch (*de Iſide*) « all the Egyptians have their animal Gods painted. The Thebans are the only people who do not employ painters, becauſe they worſhip a God whoſe form comes not under the ſenſes, and cannot be repreſented." And this is the God whom Moſes, educated at Heliopolis, adopted; but the idea was not of his invention.

Page 280. (84). *And Yaheuh.* Such is the true pronunciation

nunciation of the Jehovah of the moderns, who violate in this reſpect every rule of criticiſm; ſince it is evident that the ancients, particularly the Eaſtern Syrians and Phenicians, were acquainted neither with the *Jé* nor the *V*, which are of Tartar origin. The ſubſiſting uſage of the Arabs, which we have re-eſtabliſhed here, is confirmed by Diodorus, who calls the God of Moſes *Iaw*, (*lib.* 1.), and *Iaw* and *Iahoub* are manifeſtly the ſame word: the identity continues in that of *Iou-piter*; but in order to render it more complete, we ſhall demonſtrate the ſignification to be the ſame.

In Hebrew, that is to ſay, in one of the dialects of the common language of Lower Aſia, *Yahoub* is the participle of the verb *hib*, to exiſt, to be, and ſignifies exiſting; in other words, the principle of life, the mover or even motion (the univerſal ſoul of beings). Now what is Jupiter? Let us hear the Greeks and Latins explain their theology. "The Egyptians," ſays Diodorus, after Manatho, prieſt of Memphis, "in giving names to the five elements, called *ſpirit*, or ether, *Youpiter*, on account of the true meaning of that word: for *ſpirit* is the ſource of life, author of the vital principle in animals; and for this reaſon they conſidered him as the father, the generator of beings." For the ſame reaſon Homer ſays, father, and king of men and gods (*Diod. lib.* 1. *ſect.* 1.).

"Theologians," ſays Macrobius, "conſider You-piter as the ſoul of the world." Hence the words of Virgil: "Muſes, let us begin with You-piter; the world is full of You-piter" (*omn. Scip. ch.* 17). And in the Saturnalia he ſays, "Jupiter is the ſun himſelf." It was this alſo which made Virgil ſay: "The Spirit nouriſhes the "life (of beings), and the ſoul diffuſed through the vaſt "members

" members (of the univerſe), agitates the whole maſs, " and forms but one immenſe body."

" Ioupiter," ſays the ancient verſes of the Orphic ſect, which originated in Egypt; verſes collected by Onomacritus in the days of Piſiſtratus, " Ioupiter, repre- " ſented with the thunder in his hand, is the beginning, " origin, end, and middle of all things: a ſingle and " univerſal power, he governs every thing; heaven, " earth, fire, water, the elements, day, and night. " Theſe are what conſtitute his immenſe body: his eyes " are the ſun and moon: he is ſpace and eternity: in " fine," adds Porphyry, " Jupiter is the world, the uni- " verſe, that which conſtitutes the eſſence and life of all " beings. Now," continues the ſame author, " as phi- " loſophers differed in opinion reſpecting the nature and " conſtituent parts of this God, and as they could invent " no figure that ſhould repreſent all his attributes, they " painted him in the form of a man.... He is in a ſitting " poſture, in alluſion to his immutable eſſence; the " upper part of his body is uncovered, becauſe it is in " the upper regions of the univerſe, (the ſtars) that he " moſt conſpicuouſly diſplays himſelf. He is covered " from the waiſt downwards, becauſe reſpecting ter- " reſtrial things he is more ſecret and concealed. He " holds a ſceptre in his left hand, becauſe on the left " ſide is the heart, and the heart is the ſeat of the under- " ſtanding, which (in human beings) regulates every " action." *Euſeb. Præper. Evang. p.* 100.

The following paſſage of the geographer and philoſo- pher Strabo, removes every doubt as to the identity of the ideas of Moſes and thoſe of the heathen theolo- gians.

"Moſes, who was one of the Egyptian prieſts, taught his followers, that it was an egregious error to repreſent the Deity under the form of animals, as the Egyptians did, or in the ſhape of man, as was the practice of the Greeks and Africans. That alone is the Deity, ſaid he, which conſtitutes heaven, earth, and every living thing; that which we call the *world*, the *ſum of all things*, *nature*; and no reaſonable perſon will think of repreſenting ſuch a being by the image of any one of the objects around us. It is for this reaſon, that, rejecting every ſpecies of images or idols, Moſes wiſhed the Deity to be worſhipped without emblems, and according to his proper nature; and he accordingly ordered a temple worthy of him to be erected, &c," *Geograph. lib.* 16. *p.* 1104, edition of 1707.

The theology of Moſes has, then, differed in no reſpect from that of his followers, that is to ſay, from that of the Stoics and Epicureans, who conſider the Deity as the ſoul of the world. This philoſophy appears to have taken birth, or to have been diſſeminated when Abraham came into Egypt (200 years before Moſes), ſince he quitted his ſyſtem of idols for that of the God *Yaheuh*; ſo that we may place its promulgation about the ſeventeenth or eighteenth century before Chriſt; which correſponds with what we have ſaid, Note (78.)

As to the hiſtory of Moſes, Diodorus, properly repreſents it when he ſays, *lib.* 34 & 40, "That the Jews were "driven out of Egypt at a time of dearth, when the "country was full of foreigners, and that Moſes, a man "of extraordinary prudence and courage, ſeized this "opportunity of eſtabliſhing his religion in the mountains of Judea." It will ſeem paradoxical to aſſert, that the 600,000 armed men whom he conducted thither ought

ought to be reduced to 6,000; but I can confirm the aſſertion by ſo many proofs drawn from the books themſelves, that it will be neceſſary to correct an error which appears to have ariſen from the miſtake of the tranſcribers.

Page 280. (85). *Ei, exiſtence.* This was the monyſyllable written on the gate of the temple of Delphos. Plutarch has made it the ſubject of a diſſertation.

Page 281. (86). *The name of Oſiris preſerved in his ſong.* Theſe are the literal expreſſions of the book of Deuteronomy, ch. 32. "The works of *Tſour* are perfect." Now *Tſour* has been tranſlated by the word creator; its proper ſignification is to give *forms*, and this is one of the definitions of Oſiris in Plutarch.

Page 284. (87). *Of the archangel Michael.* "The names "of the angels and of the months, ſuch as Gabriel, "Michael, Yar, Niſan, &c. came from Babylon with "the Jews;" ſays expreſsly the Talmud of Jeruſalem. See *Beauſob. Hiſt. du Manich.* Vol. II. p. 624, where he proves that the ſaints of the Almanac are an imitation of the 365 angels of the Perſians; and Jamblicus in his Egyptian Myſteries, *ſect.* 2. *c.* 3. ſpeaks of angels, archangels, ſeraphim, &c. like a true Chriſtian.

Page 285. (88). *Theology of Zoroaſter.* "The whole phi- "loſophy of the gymnoſophiſts," ſays Diogenes Laertius on the authority of an ancient writer, "is derived from "that of the Magi, and many aſſert that of the Jews to "have the ſame origin." *Lib.* 1. *c.* 9. Megaſthenes, an hiſtorian of repute in the days of Seleucus Nicanor, and who wrote particularly upon India, ſpeaking of the philoſophy of the ancients reſpecting natural things, puts the Brachmans and the Jews preciſely on the ſame footing.

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Page 287. (89). *To reſtore the golden age upon earth.* This is the reaſon of the application of the many Pagan oracles to Jeſus, and particularly the fourth eclogue of Virgil, and the Sybilline verſes ſo celebrated among the ancients.

Page 288. (90). *At the expiration of the ſix thouſand pretended years.* We have already ſeen, note 29, this tradition current among the Tuſcans; it was diſſeminated through moſt nations, and ſhows us what we ought to think of all the pretended creations and terminations of the world, which are merely the beginnings and endings of aſtronomical periods invented by aſtrologers. That of the year or ſolar revolution, being the moſt ſimple and perceptible, ſerved as a model to the reſt, and its compariſon gave riſe to the moſt whimſical ideas. Of this deſcription is the idea of the four ages of the world among the Indians. Originally theſe four ages were merely the four ſeaſons; and as each ſeaſon was under the ſuppoſed influence of a planet, it bore the name of the metal appropriated to that planet: thus ſpring was the age of the ſun, or of gold; ſummer the age of the moon, or of ſilver; autumn the age of Venus, or of braſs; and winter the age of Mars, or of iron. Afterwards when aſtronomers invented the great year of 25 and 36 thouſand common years, which had for its object the bringing back all the ſtars to one point of departure and a general conjunction, the ambiguity of the terms introduced a ſimilar ambiguity of ideas; and the myriads of celeſtial ſigns and periods of duration which were thus meaſured, were eaſily converted into ſo many revolutions of the ſun. Thus the different periods of creation which have been ſo great a ſource of difficulty and miſapprehenſion to curious enquir-

ers, were in reality nothing more than hypothetical calculations of aſtronomical periods. In the ſame manner the creation of the world has been attributed to different ſeaſons of the year, juſt as theſe different ſeaſons have ſerved for the fictitious period of theſe conjunctions; and of conſequence has been adopted by different nations for the commencement of an ordinary year. Among the Egyptians this period fell upon the ſummer ſolſtice, which was the commencement of their year; and the departure of the ſpheres, according to their conjectures, fell, in like manner, upon the period when the ſun enters Cancer. Among the Perſians the year commenced at firſt in the ſpring, or when the ſun enters Aries; and from thence the firſt Chriſtians were led to ſuppoſe that God created the world in the ſpring: this opinion is alſo favoured by the book of Geneſis; and it is farther remarkable, that the world is not there ſaid to be created by the God of Moſes (*Yahouh*), but by the *Elohim* or gods in the plural, that is, by the *angels* or *genii*, for ſo the word conſtantly means in the Hebrew books. If we farther obſerve that the root of the word *Elohim* ſignifies ſtrong or powerful, and that the Egyptians called their *decans* ſtrong and powerful leaders, attributing to them the creation of the world, we ſhall preſently perceive that the book of Geneſis affirms neither more nor leſs than that the world was created by the *decans*, by thoſe very genii whom, according to Sanchoniathon, Mercury excited againſt Saturn, and who were called *Elohim*. It may be farther aſked why the plural ſubſtantive *Elohim* is made to agree with the ſingular verb *bara* (the Elohim creates). The reaſon is that after the Babyloniſh captivity the unity of the Supreme Being was the prevailing opinion of the Jews; it was therefore

therefore thought proper to introduce a pious ſoleciſm in language, which it is evident had no exiſtence before Moſes: thus in the names of the children of Jacob many of them are compounded of a plural verb, to which Elohim is the nominative caſe underſtood, as *Raouben* (Reuben), *they have looked upon me*, and *Samaonni* (Simeon), *they have granted me my prayer*, to wit, the Elohim. The reaſon of this etymology is to be found in the religious creeds of the wives of Jacob, whoſe gods were the *taraphim* of Laban, that is, the angels of the Perſians, and the Egyptian decans.

Page *id.* (91). *Six thouſand years had already nearly elapſed ſince the ſuppoſed creation of the world.* According to the computation of the Seventy, the period elapſed conſiſted of about 5,600 years, and this computation was principally followed. It is well known how much, in the firſt ages of the church, this opinion of the end of the world agitated the minds of men. In the ſequel, the general councils, encouraged by finding that the general conflagration did not come, pronounced the expectation that prevailed heretical, and its believers were called Millenarians; a circumſtance curious enough, ſince it is evident from the hiſtory of the Goſpels that Jeſus Chriſt was a Millenarian, and of conſequence a heretic.

Page 290. (92). *Conſtellation of the ſerpent.* "The Perſians," ſays Chardin, "call the conſtellation of the ſerpent *Ophiucus*, ſerpent of Eve: and this ſerpent *Ophiucus* or *Ophioneus* plays a ſimilar part in the theology of the Phenicians," for Pherecydes, their diſciple, and the maſter of Pythagoras, ſaid "that *Ophioneus ſerpentinus* had been chief of the rebels againſt Jupiter." See Marſ. Ficin,

Ficin. Apol. Socrat. p. m. 797. col. 2. I ſhall add that *aphah* (with aïn) ſignifies in Hebrew ſerpent.

Page *id.* (93). *Seduced the man.* In a phyſical ſenſe to ſeduce, *ſeducere*, means only to attract, to draw after us.

Page *id.* (94). *Picture of Mithra.* See this picture in Hyde, page 111, edition of 1760.

Page 291. (95). *Perſeus riſes on the oppoſite ſide.* Rather the head of Meduſa; that head of a woman once ſo beautiful, which Perſeus cut off, and which he holds in his hand, is only that of the virgin, whoſe head ſinks below the horizon at the very moment that Perſeus riſes; and the ſerpents which ſurround it are Ophiucus and the Polar Dragon, who then occupy the zenith. This ſhews us in what manner the ancients compoſed all their figures and fables. They took ſuch conſtellations as they found at the ſame time on the circle of the horizon, and collecting the different parts, they formed groupes which ſerved them as an almanac in hieroglyphic characters. Such is the ſecret of all their pictures, and the ſolution of all their mythological monſters. The Virgin is alſo Andromeda, delivered by Perſeus from the whale that *purſues* her (*pro-ſequitur.*)

Page *id.* (96). *By a chaſte virgin.* Such was the picture of the Perſian ſphere, cited by Aben Ezra in the *Cælum Poeticum* of Blaeu, p. 71. "The picture of the firſt decan "of the Virgin," ſays that writer, "repreſents a beauti- "ful virgin with flowing hair, ſitting in a chair, with "two ears of corn in her hand, and ſuckling an infant, "called Jeſus by ſome nations, and Chriſt in Greek."

In the library of the king of France is a manuſcript in Arabic, marked 1165, in which is a picture of the twelve ſigns;

ſigns; and that of the Virgin repreſents a young woman with an infant by her ſide: the whole ſcene indeed of the birth of Jeſus is to be found in the adjacent part of the heavens. The ſtable is the conſtellation of the charioteer and the goat, formerly Capricorn; a conſtellation called *præſepe Jovis Heniochi*, *ſtable* of *Iou*; and the word *Iou* is found in the name Iou-ſeph (Joſeph). At no great diſtance is the aſs of Typhon (the great ſhe-bear), and the ox or bull, the ancient attendants of the manger. Peter the porter, is Janus with his keys and bald forehead: the twelve apoſtles are the genii of the twelve months, &c. This Virgin has acted very different parts in the various ſyſtems of mythology: ſhe has been the Iſis of the Egyptians, who ſaid of her in one of their inſcriptions cited by Julian, *the fruit I have brought forth is the ſun.* The majority of traits drawn by Plutarch apply to her, in the ſame manner as thoſe of Oſiris apply to Bootes: alſo the ſeven principal ſtars of the ſhe-bear, called David's chariot, were called the chariot of Oſiris (See *Kirker*); and the crown that is ſituated behind, formed of ivy, was called *Chen-Oſiris*, the tree of Oſiris. The Virgin has likewiſe been Ceres, whoſe myſteries were the ſame with thoſe of Iſis and Mithra; ſhe has been the Diana of the Epheſians; the great goddeſs of Syria, Cybele, drawn by lions; Minerva, the mother of Bacchus; Aſtræa, a chaſte virgin taken up into heaven at the end of the golden age; Themis, at whoſe feet is the balance that was put in her hands; the Sybil of Virgil, who deſcends into hell, or ſinks below the hemiſphere with a branch in her hand, &c.

Page 292. (97). *Roſe again in the firmament. Reſurgere*, to riſe a ſecond time, cannot ſignify to return to life, but

in a metaphorical ſenſe; but we ſee continually miſtakes of this kind reſult from the ambiguous meaning of the words made uſe of in ancient tradition.

Page *id.* (98). *Chris, or conſervator.* The Greeks uſed to expreſs by X, or Spaniſh iota, the aſpirated *hâ* of the Orientals, who ſaid *hâris.* In Hebrew *heres* ſignifies the ſun, but in Arabic the meaning of the radical word is, to guard, to preſerve, and of *hâris*, guardian, preſerver. It is the proper epithet of Vichenou, which demonſtrates at once the identity of the Indian and Chriſtian Trinities, and their common origin. It is manifeſtly but one ſyſtem, which, divided into two branches, one extending to the eaſt, and the other to the weſt, aſſumed two different forms: its principal trunk is the Pythagorean ſyſtem of the ſoul of the world, or *Iou-piter.* The epithet *piter*, or father, having been applied to the demi-ourgos of Plato, gave riſe to an ambiguity which cauſed an enquiry to be made reſpecting the ſon of this father. In the opinion of the philoſophers the ſon was underſtanding, *Nous* and *Logos*, from which the *Latins* made their *Verbum.* And thus we clearly perceive the origin of the *eternal father* and of the *Verbum* his ſon, proceeding from him (*Mens ex Deo nata*, ſays Macrobius): the *anima* or *ſpiritus mundi* was the Holy Ghoſt; and it is for this reaſon that Manes, Baſilides, Valentinius, and other pretended heretics of the firſt ages, who traced things to their ſource, ſaid, that God the Father was the ſupreme inacceſſible light (that of the heaven, the *primum mobile*, or the *aplanes)*; the Son the ſecondary light reſident in the ſun, and the Holy Ghoſt the atmoſphere of the earth (See *Beauſob.* Vol. II. p. 586): hence, among the Syrians, the repreſentation of the Holy Ghoſt by a dove, the bird of Venus Urania, that is, of the

ΝΟΥΣ. ΝΟΟΣ. ΛΟΓΟΣ.

the air. The Syrians (ſays *Nigidius de Germanico*) aſſert that a dove ſat for a certain number of days on the egg of a fiſh, and that from this incubation Venus was born: Sextus Empiricus alſo obſerves (*Inſt. Pyrrh. lib.* 3. *c.* 23.) that the Syrians abſtain from eating doves; which intimates to us a period commencing in the ſign *Piſces*, in the winter ſolſtice. We may farther obſerve, that if *Chris* comes from *Hariſch* by a *chin*, it will ſignify *artificer*, an epithet belonging to the ſun. Theſe variations, which muſt have embarraſſed the ancients, prove it to be the real type of Jeſus, as had been already remarked in the time of Tertullian. "Many," ſays this writer, "ſuppoſe with greater "probability that the ſun is our God, and they refer us "to the religion of the Perſians." *Apologet. c.* 16.

Page *id.* (99). *One of the ſolar periods.* See a curious ode to the Sun, by Martianus Capella, tranſlated by Gebelin.

Page 304. (100). *Human ſacrifices.* Read the cold declaration of Euſebius (*Præp. Evang. lib.* 1. *p.* 11.) who pretends that, ſince the coming of Chriſt, there have neither been wars, nor tyrants, nor cannibals, nor ſodomites, nor perſons committing inceſt, nor ſavages devouring their parents, &c. When we read theſe fathers of the church, we are aſtoniſhed at their inſincerity or infatuation.

Page 306. (101). *Sect of Samaneans.* The equality of mankind in a ſtate of nature and in the eyes of God was one of the principal tenets of the Samaneans, and they appear to be the only ancients that entertained this opinion.

Page 309. (102). *Perverted the conſciences of men.* As long as it ſhall be poſſible to obtain purification from

crimes and exemption from punishment by means of money or other frivolous practices; as long as kings and great men shall suppose that building temples or instituting foundations, will absolve them from the guilt of oppression and homicide; as long as individuals shall imagine that they may rob and cheat, provided they observe fast during lent, go to confession, and receive extreme unction, it is impossible there should exist in society any morality or virtue; and it is from a deep conviction of truth, that a modern philosopher has called the doctrine of expiations *la vérole des sociétés.* = Σιφιλις

Page 310. (103). *Has carried its inquisition even to the sacred sanctuary of the nuptial bed.* The Mussulmans, who suppose women to have no souls, are shocked at the idea of confession, and say; How can an honest man think of listening to the recital of the actions or the secret thoughts of a woman? May we not also ask, on the other hand, how can an honest woman consent to reveal them?

Page *id.* (104). *That every where they had formed secret associations, enemies to the rest of the society.* That we may understand the general feelings of priests respecting the rest of mankind, whom they always call by the name of the people, let us hear one of the doctors of the church. "The people," says Bishop Synnesius, *in Calvit. page* 315, "are desirous of being deceived, we cannot act otherwise "respecting them. The case was similar with the ancient "priests of Egypt, and for this reason they shut themselves up in their temples, and there composed their "mysteries out of the reach of the eye of the people." And forgetting what he has just before said, he adds— "For had the people been in the secret they might have "been offended at the deception played upon them. In

"the

"the mean time how is it poſſible to conduct oneſelf "otherwiſe with the people ſo long as they are the "people? For my own part, to myſelf I ſhall always be "a philoſopher, but in dealing with the maſs of man-"kind I ſhall be a prieſt."

"A little jargon," ſays Gregory Nazianzen to St. Jerome (*Hieron. ad Nep.*) "is all that is neceſſary to im-"poſe on the people. The leſs they comprehend, the "more they admire. Our forefathers and doctors of "the church have often ſaid, not what they thought, "but what circumſtances and neceſſity dictated to "them."

"We endeavour," ſays Sanchoniathon, "to excite ad-"miration by means of the marvellous." (*Præp. Evang. lib.* 3.)

Such was the conduct of all the prieſts of antiquity, and is ſtill that of the Bramins and Lamas, who are the exact counterpart of the Egyptian prieſts. Such was the practice of the Jeſuits, who marched with haſty ſtrides in the ſame career. It is uſeleſs to point out the whole depravity of ſuch a doctrine. In general every aſſociation which has myſtery for its baſis, or an oath of ſecrecy, is a league of robbers againſt ſociety, a league divided in its very boſom into knaves and dupes, or in other words agents and inſtruments. It is thus we ought to judge of thoſe modern clubs, which, under the name of Illuminatiſts, Martiniſts, Caglioſtroniſts, Free-maſons and Meſmerites, infeſt Europe. Theſe ſocieties ape the follies and deceptions of the ancient Cabaliſts, Magicians, Orphics, &c. who, ſays Plutarch, led into errors of conſiderable magnitude not only individuals, but kings and nations.

Page 311. (105). *They make themſelves in turns aſtrologers,*

caſters of planets, magicians, &c. What is a magician, in the ſenſe in which the people underſtand the word? a man who by words and geſtures pretends to act on ſupernatural beings, and compel them to deſcend at his call and obey his orders. Such was the conduct of the ancient prieſts, and ſuch is ſtill that of all prieſts in idolatrous nations, for which reaſon we have given them the denomination of magicians.

And when a Chriſtian prieſt pretends to make God deſcend from heaven, to fix him to a morſel of leaven, and to render, by means of this taliſman, ſouls pure and in a ſtate of grace, what is all this but a trick of magic? And where is the difference between a Chaman of Tartary who invokes the genii, or an Indian Bramin, who makes his Vichenou deſcend in a veſſel of water to drive away evil ſpirits? Yes, the identity of the ſpirit of prieſts in every age and country is fully eſtabliſhed! Every where it is the aſſumption of an excluſive privilege, the pretended faculty of moving at will the powers of nature; and this aſſumption is ſo direct a violation of the right of equality, that whenever the people ſhall regain their importance, they will for ever aboliſh this ſacrilegious kind of nobility, which has been the type and parent ſtock of the other ſpecies of nobility.

Page 312. (106). *Who paid for them as for commodities of the greateſt value.* A curious work would be the comparative hiſtory of the *agnuſes* of the pope and the *paſtils* of the grand Lama. It would be worth while to extend this idea to religious ceremonies in general, and to confront, column by column, the analogous or contraſting points of faith and ſuperſtitious practices in all nations. There is one more ſpecies of ſuperſtition which it would be equally

ſalutary

ſalutary to cure, blind veneration for the great; and for this purpoſe it would be alone ſufficient to write a minute detail of the private life of kings and princes. No work could be ſo philoſophical as this; and accordingly we have ſeen what a general outcry was excited among kings and the panders of kings, when the Anecdotes of the Court of Berlin firſt appeared. What would be the alarm were the public put in poſſeſſion of the ſequel of this work? Were the people fairly acquainted with all the crimes and all the abſurdities of this ſpecies of idol, they would no longer be expoſed to covet their ſpecious pleaſures, of which the plauſible and hollow appearance diſturbs their peace and hinders them from enjoying the much more ſolid happineſs of their own condition.

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